OTHER HANDS

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EDITORIAL: HAPPY YESTARË!

With this our fourth issue, *Other Hands* has successfully completed its first year of existence. We hope that the new year will see many new (and renewed) subscriptions, as well as continued international interest in our journal. Everyone who has ever subscribed or contributed to Other Hands over the last year should commend themselves for having participated in this virtually unique and unprecedented publication.

We have made history in producing the first journal to devote itself to a specific expression of Tolkien fandom which has heretofore been the exclusive prerogative of a licensed, commercial venture. We have worked to create a worldwide community of Middle-earth gamers where none had existed (a still largely unfinished project). And we have facilitated a three way communication link between the licensers (Tolkien Enterprises), the licensees (Iron Crown Enterprises), and the consumers/audience of Tolkien-related role-playing games (you all). 'Tis a yestarë' to celebrate indeed!

But we have only begun to fight, as the saying goes. With this issue, we open die pages of *Other Hands* to your adventure scenarios. By virtue of our nonprofit status and our ecumenical commitment to welcoming the use of all game systems, we are empowered to deliver to you, the reader, not only talk *about* Middle-earth gaming but Middle-carth gaming itself. This is our ultimate *raison d'etre*.

First honors for this new feature of *Other Hands* belong to Tom Schneider, who has offered us an exciting adventure (which I had the fortune to participate in as a player) set in Dunland during the War of the Ring, a prelude to the Battle of the Fords of Isen. Théodred sends a group of scouts to investigate rumors of an unholy alliance between the Wizard Saruman and the Dunlending clans beyond the Isen. Depending on the evidence these spies are able to uncover, Théodred may be able to convince his misinformed king of the true peril Isengard represents (thereby foiling the deceits of Wormtongue). Depending on their ingenuity, those scouts may even manage to dissuade some of the clans from allying themselves with the treacherous Wizard. The player-characters may actually end up altering (or, at least, modifying) the course of the War of the Ring by their own actions.

In addition to this ready-to-run adventure, we also offer an entire campaign background of a most unique sort. Professor Norman Talbot of Newcastle, Australia has set his literary hand to render for us an account of a Middle-carth campaign set in the far South—set, as a matter of fact, in a mythical Third Age Antipodes. He narrates the founding of the Gondorian prison colony of "Girt-by-Sea", and the course of its history up through the beginning of the Fourth Age. In good Tolkienian tradition, Professor Talbot presents this history as a "found manuscript," overflowing with tantalizing allusions and lacunae at every turn. A delight to read.

Contributors: Norman Talbot, Anders Blixt R. Benjamin Gribbon, W. Joseph Balderson, Gerrit Nuckton, James Owen, Gunnar Brolin, Tom Schneider

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Submission Deadline for next issue:

March 7, 1994

OTHER HANDS

Continuing this issue's theme of finding out what kind of Middle-earth campaigns our readers actually play, veteran Other Hands contributor Anders Blixt and newcomers R. Benjamin Gribbon and W. Joe Balderson have given us reports of games past and present. Gerrit Nuckton has, in a similar vein, devoted a short piece to the particularly popular adventure motif of "the return" and how it might be put to use in a Middle-carth campaign.

Joe and Ben themselves make a quick return in the first of (hopefully) many more essays on Tolkien's treatment of magic in Middle-earth, following close on the heels of Andrew McMurry's article from last issue. Also making a return to us (with a vengeance) is James Owen of Middle-earth metallurgy fame, following up his cursory remarks on forging technology from last issue with a (most thorough) "how to" guide for developing realistic metallurgical principles in a gaming context. Finally, the debate over the population of Gondor and Arnor begun last issue continues with Gunnar Brolin's response to Jason Beresford's response to Gunnar's initial article on this topic.

As announced last issue, we have written up an address list so that our subscribers will be able to find out whether they have any fellow readers of Other Hands nearby. This list is available only to our subscribers and will not be circulated for any other purpose. But while you are busy writing to your co-readers, don't forget to write to Other Hands—our "Communications" section has gotten off to a good start this issue, and we hope that more letters will be coming in. By the way, your journal editor is now on America Online and the Internet, so don't hesitate to drop me a line, or send submissions (submissions are via Internet only— "holonet" address), if you have access to either. My America Online e-mail address is: **chrisl224**, and my new Internet address is: **chriss@holonet.net** (Or **chris 1224@aol.com)**.

FINE PRINT

Other Hands is an international gaming journal devoted to fantasy role-playing set in J.R.R. Tolkien's secondary world of Middle-earth. It is a quarterly, nonprofit publication welcoming submissions dealing with any aspect of gaming in the context of Tolkien's world: scenario ideas, rule suggestions, gaming product reviews, gamemastering aids, bibliographic resources, essays on Middle-earth, and whatever else our readership would like to see in print. In a word, Other Hands aims to be the definitive Tolkien-related gaming journal for a worldwide role-playing community. Within the pages of Other Hands, the interested gamer may publish materials with reference to any game mechanics he or she chooses (including Rolemaster and Middle-earth Role Playing). Such gaming material may deal with any time period of Tolkien's world, and need not be bound to what has already seen print in Iron Crown's modules. Other Hands provides this freedom because it is a nonprofit publication. Subscription rates are as follows: inside the USA—1 issue $3/4 issues $ 12; outside the USA—surface 1 issue $3.50/4 issues $14—air 1 issue $4.50/4 issues $18. Payment should be made to Chris Sccman: PO Box 1213, Novato, CA 94948, USA. No Eurochecks, please!

Submissions arc welcome in any form (preferably legible), but are easiest to edit when received on a floppy disk. Word for Windows is the editing software currently in use, so if there is any question as to the readability of your disk, please save your document in ASCII or text-only format and include a hard copy. All submitted materials remain the copyright of the author unless we are otherwise informed. All submissions must be sent to Chris Seeman: PO Box 1213, Novato, CA 94948 (USA). Please write me or call if you encounter any difficulties, my phone number is (415) 892—9066. Please note also that I may be reached over Internet: chris224@aol.com (for communications and inquiries), chriss@holonet.net (for direct submissions).

COMMUNICATIONS

Dear Chris Seeman:

I enjoyed your article on Queen Berúthiel—just enough factual information to set the stage and enough mystery to whet the appetite. Very good. Incidentally, the quote "Ruth could also be a pun for rûth 'ire'… (OH 3: 18)" is by Nancy Martsch, not by Tom Loback as cited.

On the population of Gondor and Arnor: this, and other problems like it, are a direct result of Tolkien's extending the time scale of the Second and Third Ages. Events which in the real world would take place over centuries are stretched to cover millennia, and there is no increase in the number of events to fill the extended time. Númcnóreans live 200+ years, and yet have fewer children than real world people have in eighty. Technological change is virtually nonexistent over a span of six millennia. Obviously, real world statistics won't apply. About the best one can do is to use real world numbers and multiply the time factor by three or four.

James Owen's exasperation with ICE in the field of metallurgy echoes my own.

My area of interest is language, and it causes no end of annoyance to see sloppy and foolish mistakes (like the wholesale borrowing of Scandinavian words into Orkish without any attempt to modify them to conform to the Orkish phonetic system, or the mistakes in grammar in the *Middle-earth Adventure Guidebook II).* Not that ICE is the only game company to do this; many games (computer and board games included) do this, and some are a lot worse. But ICE at least tries to present a professional appearance—they employ good artists, they proofread their spelling—which makes such carelessness all the more maddening. Perhaps they could employ the team concept of adventure parties and send the stuff out to experts in various fields for review?

Other Hands is looking good.

Nancy Martsch
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Hello,

I play in a Middle-earth campaign setting, but do not use the *MERP/Rolemaster* rule system (though it started out that way). One set of rules binds this game: 1) we don't play named figures out of the books, 2) we can't change the known history (only the implied history), 3) we can be the children (but not the parents) of known figures (though we have relaxed this rule for human characters), and 4) character races must be chosen according to which peoples were in existence during a particular period (mostly humans now, but as time advances, the characters' children get involved in adventures). This system works extremely well where both the players and GM are familiar with the books (As good role-playcrs, we know not to go searching through *The Silmarillion* for hints in any case, since events that affect the characters must be taken on their own terms.).

My GM and group began gaming in 1990, starting with the awakening of the Elves in the First Age and progressing from there to around the mid-Second Age. We played it flat through

the discovery that there are dangers out there, to the creation of weapons and the beginnings of magic. Since then, some players have left and others have come in, making for a mixed group with very few whose characters we present at the awakening. My character isn't one who awoke (I came a week late.), but I am of the first generation of Sindar (My father was Cirdan, my mother a Maia of the woods.)

Scotto the Unwise
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Chris,

As for integrating Middle-earth with *GURPS (Generic Universal Role-playing System),* things are still somewhat rough. What I've done is to take some ideas from the *GURPS* fantasy races book and modify them by adding some of my own ideas. Probably the most developed of these ever-changing race templates is the one for Hobbits (since they appear as the main characters in Tolkien's books and are therefore the most clearly defined as far as racial characteristics go; and—though others don't always share my enthusiasm—I enjoy playing them).

As far as settings go, I have several of the ICE modules, but have never had a chance to use them. I think that they're good for general stuff, but lack some of the detail needed for *GURPS* (especially for noncombat, non-magic areas). I feel that using *GURPS* gives much more scope for character personality development and interaction than does *MERP.*

GURPS basic magic (I don't have their magic supplement.) sort of works (We tend not to run non-magic oriented adventures anyway, so it hasn't really been a problem.). The *GURPS* magic system probably needs revamping if one wants to run an adventure that is true to a Middle-earth setting that does involve magic.

As far as *MERP* goes, I discovered it while poking around a gaming store (those very rare and hard-to-find places). Being already familiar with *GURPS* (but really wanting to role-play in Middle-earth), I bought it. After reading through it, I was rather disappointed with the rule system, but liked the background information; so I bought several of their campaign modules, hoping to use the settings with *GURPS* (as culling the same information from Tolkien's books or developing it on my own could take a long time). As far as others who use *MERP,* I know of none (other than yourself, of course). *[Ed.—Actually, since 1981, I have always used the* RuneQuest *rule system for my Middle-earth campaign, though* in *my module-writing for ICE I naturally present everything in* MERP *mechanics.]*

What I like and dislike about *MERP:* 1) the critical tables for combat are diverse (which makes combat a bit more interesting), 2) although I tend to strongly dislike the concept of classes, *MERP* does allow characters to buy skills from other areas (But it remains far too restrictive, pigeonholing characters rather than allowing them to be unique individuals.), 3) I also dislike character levels (although I agree that there must be some kind of mechanism for advancing attributes or skills), 4) *MERP* overemphasizes combat, skills, maneuvering, etc. to the detriment of character role-playing.

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Dear Chris,

It seems *Other Hands* is progressing well. I was most interested in reading the letter from Eduardo Martinez Santamaría on behalf of his Spanish Tolkien role-playing group *(OH* 3: 2). I too am keen to modify *Middle-earth Role Playing* and/or *Rolemaster* to make it closer to what Tolkien would have intended (I have been fiddling with this on and off for about fifteen years).

One idea would be to make character generation quicker but more rigid (i.e., no more Dúnadan Warrior Monks!), while still giving players a wide range of options. Another idea would be to make combat quicker while retaining the accuracy of the existing *MERP/Rolemaster* system. My aim (were I to involve myself in designing a playable system) would be to computerize as many of the repetitive tasks as possible (e.g., how many rolls it takes to discover that your character gave an opponent a bleeding leg!).

Concerning magic, I think that the *MERP/Rolemaster* systems are quite good (far better, for instance, than *AD&D),* but some of the spells and spell lists are out of place in Middle-earth. I'm not sure that Andrew McMurry's proposals for an alternative magic system (OH 3: 11—12) would accurately model magic in Middle-earth (or even be playable), but I look forward to the second part of his article.

I am interested in creating an on-line gamemaster "Assistant," but will need some sort of financial incentive to motivate me to devote the necessary time to it. I'm also interested in: 1) refining the experience point system, 2) updating *War Law,* and 3) combining into a single document all of the information relevant to *Middle-earth Role Playing* contained within the *Rolemaster* companions. If people such as Eduardo would like to get in touch concerning any of these aspects of game design, feel free to write me.

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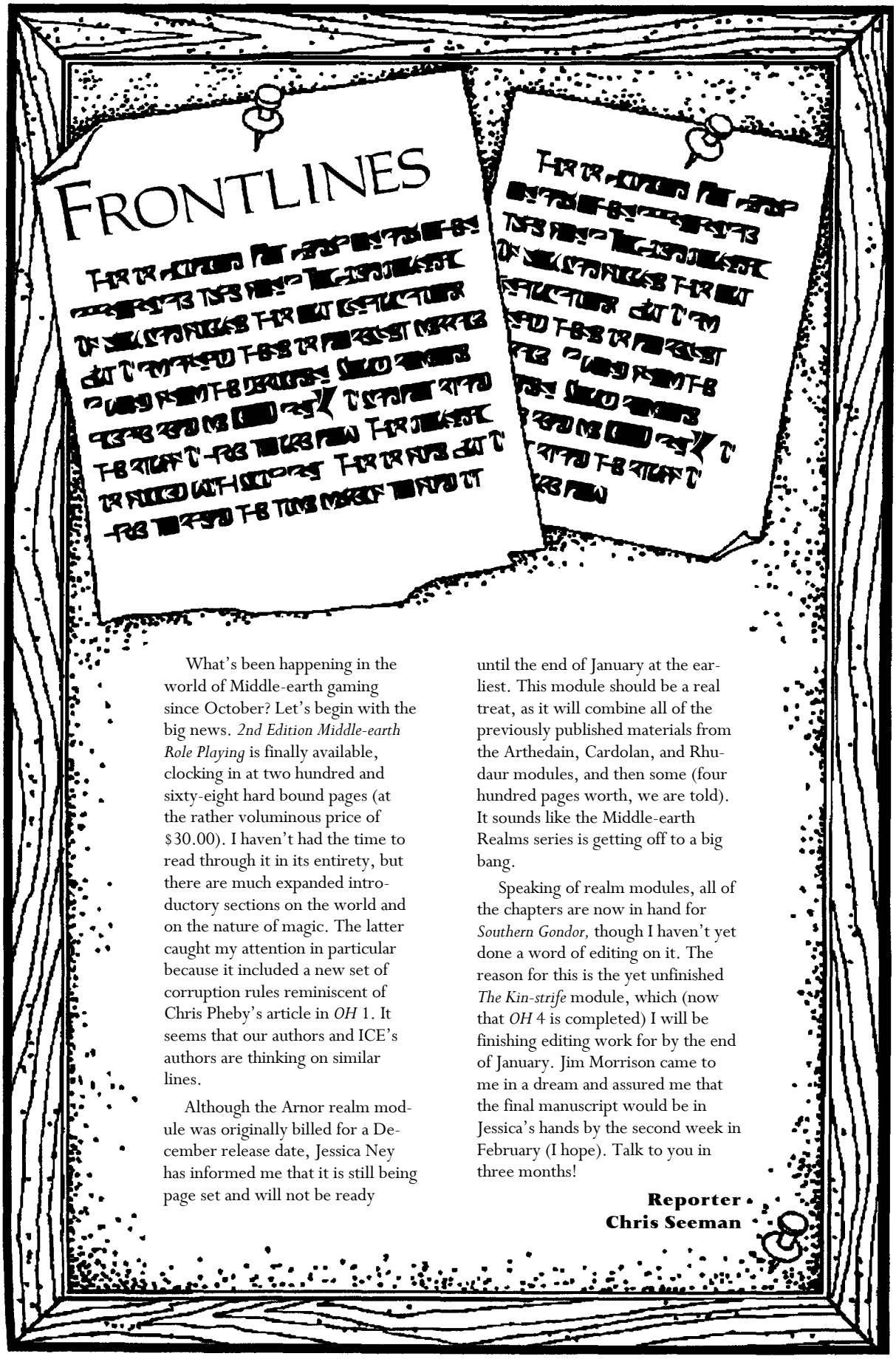

FRONTLINES

What's been happening in the world of Middle-earth gaming since October? Let's begin with the big news. *2nd Edition Middle-earth Role Playing* is finally available, clocking in at two hundred and sixty-eight hard bound pages (at the rather voluminous price of $30.00). I haven't had the time to read through it in its entirety, but there are much expanded introductory sections on the world and on the nature of magic. The latter caught my attention in particular because it included a new set of corruption rules reminiscent of Chris Pheby's article in *OH* 1. It seems that our authors and ICE's authors are thinking on similar lines.

Although the Arnor realm module was originally billed for a December release date, Jessica Ney has informed me that it is still being page set and will not be ready until the end of January at the earliest. This module should be a real treat, as it will combine all of the previously published materials from the Arthedain, Cardolan, and Rhudaur modules, and then some (four hundred pages worth, we are told). It sounds like the Middle-earth Realms series is getting off to a big bang.

Speaking of realm modules, all of the chapters are now in hand for *Southern Gondor,* though I haven't yet done a word of editing on it. The reason for this is the yet unfinished *The Kin-strife* module, which (now that *OH* 4 is completed) I will be finishing editing work for by the end of January. Jim Morrison came to me in a dream and assured me that the final manuscript would be in Jessica's hands by the second week in February (I hope). Talk to you in three months!

Reporter
Chris Seeman

Middle-Earth Down Under: An Antipodian Campaign

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The readers of Other Hands *may be interested in the enclosed background material to the role-playing game* Hunter Variant, *developed by myself, my son Nick Talbot and my daughter Ruth Talbot-Stokes. The system is (as far as I know) only played in the Hunter Valley region of New South Wales, Australia (And we have no immediate plans to change this!). Six scenarios are extant based on this antipodean Middle-earth campaign, and I am working on a novel version of the first, "Felix ofGodsport's Last Tournament" It concerns the Ogre Mages and a long-past intervention by an Istari. The second novel, "The Rent-Collectors Who Accepted as Currency Hay from Orestaia Faos," will deal with the finding of the palantír at Khand's Grave Beach, and what coveted it.*

To The Scholars of the Ithilien Groves, A Historical Note Bearing Greetings From the Antipodes

by the hand of Porkshy,
called the Two-Up Philosopher,
Dean of the Landward's College, Godsport,
for the Free Peoples of Girt-by-Sea

My colleagues, and my venerable master Rollif the Landward, ask me to fulfil your request for a summary of the Annals of "the Colony of Girt-by-Sea." Since a restored monarchy's expectations about history must be unlike those of an independent Alliance of Free Peoples, what follows may sometimes offer an unfamiliar emphasis, but it is sent in good faith, and of course with hearty congratulations on the triumphant end of a grievous and cruel war. We all look forward to the close future cooperation that my colleagues' visit surely heralds. If your honored Steward sponsors a reciprocal visit, you may yet be able to tell me what I *should* have included to be of more appropriate help to you!

I can postpone descriptions of the other races of the Unbroken Alliance until after my summary of the Annals, but must initiate that summary with some notes on the Race of Men in Girt-by-Sea, including their relations with the State and Empire of Gondor.

Preamble on Númenórean Remains

The far-travelers of Númenor knew our land. The Sun-Pillar of Tar-Telperien stands at the Hot Gates on our East Coast, slender and tall, but made of a white metal that neither the hate of warriors, nor the labor of slaves, nor the skills of evil mages, nor the malice of defeated gods has made a mark upon over all the centuries. Nor were the complex ellipses carved on the chronometric floor below ever scarred by any mischief until my own lifetime. Now blasting-powder has cracked a single deep sliver from the southmost or summer time-dial at the pillar's foot, for some three men's length, and blackened a much larger area. For we too have had our wars.

Her monument is opposed, though not matched, by the two on the South Cliff of that solemn harbor. The copper sheathing of the Shrine of Sunrise, placed there by order of Atanamir the Great, has long been removed; though most of its massy portico remains, the altar-bowl has been used for abominations no Númenórean could countenance. Of the Colossus of Ar-Gimilzôr the feet and shins only remain, but these too are valued by the elder races of Girt as proof that Men have an ancient title to dwell in the land.

Some believe in legends of much more esoteric "remains." In the stories of the Old Ones whose land this was before our ancestors came, and in the dream-singings of the Geniuses, dwellers on that coast for Ages of the World (our "Glaciations") are tantalizing allusions to powerful "Hidden Things of Númen" and the name of "Lost Tar-Miriel." But of these things, by the nature of their sources, nothing more can be said at this time.

Preamble on Gondorian Remains

Two mighty things of your early history at least the wild bounty of Ulmo has left us. The Farstone or palantir employed in the great Observatory of Godsport, and which your honored King Telcontar was the first to employ to speak to us, was cut from the belly of a dead diving-whale washed up on the beach of Khand's Grave in 2078 (your 2977).

The great Crystal of Harmony, that once graced the cliffs of your fierce city of Umbar, now stands in the Sea Meadow above Freeport. It replaces the black Sphere of Starmetal upon which the hands of the Free Peoples were first laid for the vows of our Alliances. Mysteriously indeed was that Crystal rolled through all the seas of Middle-earth into our little mangrove village of Fishers' Ghosts! Beyond these mighty trinkets, what Gondor has sent us is people.

Notes on Early History (to the King-strife)

Ever since the flat earth became a ball, dear colleagues, your northern hemisphere has dominated our southern, not in its magnetic power or gravitational integrity but in the number, complexity and sophistication of its sentient races, and the evil with which they invest numbers, complexity, and sophistication alike. Certainly virtue has also taken most ennobling and spectacular forms in the elder hemisphere, but it can seem to us of the south that we pluck from Gondwana-current more buoyant evil than good!

This rather gloomy view of the North well suited our ancestors' second-century arrival on Girt's shore in the Seven Royal Oaths. Are the Oaths much celebrated in your song and story, northern colleagues? No? Well, perhaps not: all histories welcome the cooling mists of oblivion to soothe some sore spots on their body politick — and Hyarmendacil I was not the king of Gondor most devoted to a dispassionate vision of justice. But even if the Royal Oaths are forgotten by most citizens in your difficult new kingdom and only recalled by your historians, I can assure you that lyrics of maudlin nostalgia for the Bay of Belfalas are still hoarsely chorused every eighth-day eve from many a Girtish tavern.

Each Oath was a fleet of prison-ships, of which each bottom was generously stuffed with an interesting cargo of the criminals, misfits and rebels that Hyarmendacil had reluctantly resolved to do without. The First Oath was drawn mainly from Gondor itself; the Second, Fourth and Fifth were filled largely by the hardhanded Reavers of Umbar, Anduin Vale and Calenardhon; the Third seems to have been a mixed creel, with Porosian Haradrim and Easterlings noticeable for the first time. But in every Oath, and especially the last two, there were always Dunlendings of the Debatable Lands: such troublous neighbors they were (and disobedient) for a long-suffering Eternal Kingdom! From such flotsam are we sprung. Specifically, as my wife points out, prisoners of the first three Oaths were almost entirely male; we were born of the Late Oaths.

Our ancestors, those precious goods treasured up behind colonial bulkheads, called themselves the Little Curses. They had their bad points, but so too did the Scarlet Swearers, the guards that oversaw them, with point, edge and thong, as they built port and harbor, tower and hall, road and bridge, in the seven-year "sworn servitude" that discharged their debt to Royal Gondor. Incidentally, within the years of Oath Two, the Scarlet Swearers ceased to wear scarlet, though their language doubtless retained its color. The unflattering reason is that the Old Ones, ancient rulers of Girt-by-Sea and still its allies and guardians, could strike down a scarlet coat from afar, while themselves scarce visible, clad only in the clay livery of the land.

Our Golden Age was brief indeed, since it was not long before the Northern invaders made our coastal cities uninhabitable. Still, the memory that we had such an age of beauty, however lacerated by aggression from without and competing theologies from within, is a constant comfort and challenge to our present bruised self-esteem. Some say the North stimulated greatness in us, others that it blighted a natural growth.

In recent centuries nobler vows have replaced the blood that daubed our frontiers, but we still appreciate the saying that "Grim is the gift gripped from North currents." In the last years of the Oaths the Hounds of Harad began their "whitebirding," a notorious form of slave-catching that, Cuin of Arnach well says, "gave the very Ocean an evil name!" In less than thirty years of systematic raids the Haradrim burned every trade-port and fishing harbor on the Ulmic coast and the Haldrim Reef, and murdered what Girtfolk they could not enslave. Hardrim they call it now, a bitter jest that links the invaders' race with the black fused fangs that remain of that lovely thousand-mile reef the Sea-Elves and strandmen once traveled "half-year South, half-year North", in the long raft-cities, Ulmeia, Vor and Storm-Step.

Two centuries later, it was the war between the Haradrim and the no more merciful white Corsairs of Ulmo and Umbar that created our Alliance of the Free Nations. Your Empire, as had become customary, promised us aid, but could rarely afford to keep such promises. Fortunately for the good conscience of your rulers, we soon relieved them of the guilt of such promises. All through your King-Strife our Duchess Falassë welcomed citizens of the Empire who wished to take the Southern Searoad to become free Girtmen here, whatever side they supported. However, at some point (rightly or wrongly) she also sent ships to aid Castamir the Admiral. King Eldacar, on his restoration, cast the Southern Sea Colonies out from his Empire, and declared Obloquy on the Duke. It was during this war that our Alliance of Elves, Dwarrow and Men was tested, and thereafter trusted. It was Falassë's grandson Pelagion who underwent the Old Ones' initiation to make alliance with them against the Cold Ogres, dreadful creatures of the mountains, much like evil Rock Geniuses

Castamir's Corsairs, disappointed of an Empire, decided on a coastline of victims instead. Alternately with Harad's Galleys of the Sleepless, and no more mercifully, they strafed our eastern coastline until the Singing Elves and much of Mankind were forced to retreat inland, across the Eredduil, the Bloom Mountains and the Sunbitten Lands, to the shores of the Inland Sea. The first colonists, led by the Valiances of the Vale and the Dunlending Apts, founded the Abers of Freckland, Maiden Castle, Freck Bridge, Sweetwater, Sebright of the Ships, all in four years. And Godsport, which is where I was born, has been Girt's chiefest dancing-floor for coin, pen, sword, fishtail, tongue, prick and belly ever since, down the changing years.

It was here on the Inland shores we met the Southern Dwarves, or Dwarrow. But I shall begin with the more familiar beings, the Elves, and then turn to the Dwarves, Old Ones, and Geniuses. Will that content you? If not, why, unroll the scroll further on: I shall never know!

A note on the races of Girt-by-Sea

Elves

There are no Elves indigenous to the Southern Continent or the South Islands. However, at least a few Grey-Elf explorers came here before humanity, and influenced the Geniuses, the Old Ones of the Rain-Forest. However, I do not suppose the Singing-Elves (those you call Green-Elves) that spread through our beloved South Land over the same period as ourselves are much different from your own Elven neighbors. Their gardening and bush-wifery, no less than their music and dance, are much respected; some Men, especially of the Old Ones, consider that they are even over-influential upon our lives. Compared to us they are too skilled by half, and sometimes too honest in their chaffer!

Sea-Elves: None remain, but no big ship is allowed to forget the Sea-Elves that died with the Haldrim Reef. They taught the dolphins to sing, and the beasts still swim beside almost every keel (except those that smell of blood) calling and calling their lost teachers.

Grey-Elves: Rarely seen in the cities, they pay us little attention, as far as we can tell. Although resented by some as "the Lofties," the name derives not from their pride but from their living in the Mount Lofty Ranges (as well as the Dryslopes and Warrumbungles). We are merely uninteresting to them, but the Old Ones they actively dislike as barbarous and animistic: they consider the Dream-search, like Shapechanging, a misunderstanding of Song Theology. As for the Dwarrow, how could those enemies of magic be anything but infuriating to beings with magic in every bone? What Elves think of the Geniuses I have never been told.

Dwarrow

"Southern Dwarves" dwell in the Moth-Mountains, the Jenolan Smith-Caves, and the new Mountains of the Evenrust. They are haters of

all magic: it vexes, they say, the bones of the Mother. In their wry unhuman humor they call themselves the Eldest Earth-Children, the Volcano-Worms, the Hammer-Suckers, the Mother Lovers, the Bastards of the Ice That Ate The World, and so on — and indeed they are prodigiously long-lived. I have been in Cobber Petra, their stone craft-city "that the glacier flowed across and would not bend," and indeed (whatever you think of their Mother-Worship) there are enough events from enough years carved onto the tall leaves of stone in their chamber of Modyar Bull, or Recordings, to quite persuade me of the millennia of endurance they boast. Also I have seen more than one high-quality spell dispersed by a single glance through "The Mother's Green Tears" (representing chips from their primal Glacier) or the ruby lens of "Bull's-Blood," in circumstances that I believe not even the scientific skepticism of the Elves of Dryslope could dismiss.

The Dwarrow claim to know the Dream of Durin, from the First Age, at first hand. Indeed, one of their families bears the name of Durin even yet. Men can interbreed with Elves, and interbreeding with the Old Ones is quite common. However, it is not possible for us to breed with Dwarrow, because, they say, they come from the First Age. Indeed, our chirurgeons say that the bones of Dwarves are made from a different "carbon" from ours. Dwarrow say that they have lived in the volcanoes through a whole "Ice Age;" their tales of the Cold Mother of the Walking Ice, the Gondwana Earthdance and the Anger of the Mountains are both convincing and significantly similar to songs of the Old Ones.

Dwarrow have parthenic muscles, very short crowded fibers, wide baskety wombs, deep chests and abundant hair-follicles; even their lungs are more dense than ours. Both their kinds of blood are difficult to shed because of the hardness of their skin, and I have seen a deep chest-wound suffered by a Dwarrow, that clotted within five minutes. I have never seen a Dwarrow even near five feet in height, but they weigh something over twice the weight of a normal grown man. They cannot, of course, swim or float, though I have seen one walk under water. Dwarrow have had to "teach themselves the sun," and to protect their shadowskin, as they call it. They are deathly pale and yet their hair and eyes are black. Their eyes are enfolded and heavy-lidded, with diffraction and indices different from ours. The Old Ones, whom the Dwarrow call the Sun-Children, prefer not to see them, and the races avoid each other.

Old Ones

Probably a form of Men, they live in families. Some travel all year between hunting-grounds; another kind shuns the very grasslands and woods, the streams and lakes that the first kind seek. This kind is black and naked, and lives in the fierce heat of the wind-deserts, scorning all protection from their Sun, drinking the dew she sends and eating the tiny and the hidden life of the stones, such as tower-ants and sun-lizards. Both kinds are shape-shifters, and all tell us stories of their Dreams, where all animals, and some trees, wear human form. It is these stories that the Elves hate; I do not understand them enough to hate them, but suppose some are derived from the days when the Geniuses were not recognized by the Old Ones as humanoids like themselves.

Fire-carrying is a shamanistic skill (some say their elders train themselves to swallow it, which of course is absurd). Still, I have seen them suck flame from a hollow staff-stick and spit it into the dry punk of reeds without suffering burns, so the tale has a cause! Each Old One adopts a particular kind of creature as her or his own soul-image, and reveres it utterly. If it be a food-animal, that Old One who adopts it could not, even when starving, eat of it. Yet they are devoted hunters, and will persist in their hunting at all times, without an eighth-day or any of the holidays of our customs, except for funerals, for which all things stop. When the funeral is complete, the name of the one dead may not be pronounced until many years have passed, and then only in stories in which the one dead has become an active spirit; for this reason, though their memories for places and food are prodigious, we historians cannot rely upon them as upon Men and Elves (and sometimes Dwarrow).

The Geniuses

Old Ones regard Geniuses as something like gods, but are not afflicted by religions in the way that Men are. Their mysteries are strictly divided between males and females, which Men would find unendurable. They are said to be much like the rocks and trees that take human shape in the Old Ones' stories, though I have never myself seen either rock or tree turn into a Genius, or the reverse!

Geniuses are also like the Dwarrow, because their bones seem quite different from ours, with a simpler matrix, though who can say what is simple in the closest magic of the World? Their muscle-fibres are longer, thinner, & less numerous than ours, with something of the stiff delicacy of a very old man. But strength and tension can go together! They can run, or walk, for immense distances on little nourishment, endure great heat and dehydration, and (what is harder for us to understand) exist for days without speech or company. They eat immense quantities of protein-rich food, and burn up fat and alcohol very quickly; they also have prodigious memories and telepathic (& maybe shapeshift) abilities.

THE ANNALS

Gondor's Calendar was used by Men-in-Girt until the Obloquy of 1448, after which the Girt Calendar was adopted, of which year 1 is Gondor's 899. Square brackets indicate Gondor reckonings (where necessary) in these annals. Note: artistic citations are restricted to the third century, to indicate the culture of Golden-Age Girt.

1 [899] King Falastur ordains Valacar's First Expedition to the "South Islands." Valacar lands north of Hot Gates, claims "The South Land."

5 [904] Valacar's return: "royal pearls and gold" presented.

13 [912] Valacar's Second Expedition: "the Three Lost Ships."

14 [913] Minas Telperiën ("the Port of the Pillar," later "Hot Gates") founded. Falastur d.

34 [933] King Eärnil I visits captured Umbar, ordains Ciryancar's Expedition.

36 Ciryancar's Town founded: later "Crown Anchorage."

38[937] King Ciryandil takes title "Lord of the Southern Seas," creates Ciryancar "Duke of the Pearl Coasts."

115 Rovacil's Expedition finds Crown

[1014] Anchorage devastated by fire, helps in rebuilding. Hot Gates founded.

134 The Inlander's Gold discoveries: Mine Town founded.

[1035] The Vintner's Riot. Hyarmendacil I condemns "Rebels, Wasters and Rioters" of Osgiliath to the Southern Mines, declares Dukedom of the Pearl Coasts vacant and appoints his Admiral, Cirion the Scarlet, "Duke of Crown Anchorage."

136 First Royal Oath: on its arrival Cirion dismisses Duke Ciryancar, who disappears on the same night.

143 Second Royal Oath. Old Ones resist Inlander's Gold settlers.

145 Cirion's soldiers forbidden to wear scarlet.

[1050] Hyarmendacil I "cleanses the Harnen:" victory over Harad.

152 Third Royal Oath. Famine: Mine Town abandoned.

167 Hot Gates slaves' revolt. Cirion d.

168 Fourth Royal Oath. First Dwarrow Battle. Miners' revolt.

173 Fifth Royal Oath. Walkout revolt. Second Dwarrow Battle, retreat from Inlander mining towns. Gold Cult among refugees.

180 Sixth Royal Oath. Haradrim begin "whitebirding" raids. Third Dwarrow battle. Sun-Swords Cult begins among soldiers.

186 Harad atrocity: "the Drowning of the Dwarfs."

189 Haradrim intercept Seventh Royal Oath: first known use of "Khandian Fire." Prisoners saved by Sea-Elves of Raft Vor.

190 Haldrim raft-cities destroyed. Sea-Elves massacred.

212 Haradrim repulsed at White Smile by combined force of Men, Dwarrow and Green-Elves, led by Ulman the Mage. Sea-Elven wilbera and puppy-drums first played by Men. Ulmo's Lullaby composed.

214 Haradrim burn Crown Anchorage but are driven back into the sea with Grey-Elf magical aid. Song-play The Brewer and the Sea-Elf Thirst by Gariouen (?).

220 Battle of the Bridges massacre. Crown Anchorage burned for third time. Ulman disappears Inland.

232 Haradrim defeated at Hot Gates. "Fishers of Girt" song and revolt. "Dirge of the Sea-Elves," "Ulman's Song" and The Deed of Ulman sung. Fishers' and Weavers' Guildhouses opened in Freeport.

233 Haradrim fleet sunk, "Khandian fire" used for the last time. Gest of the Drowned Dwarfs composed (probably by Mackekkis).

234 Pact of Three Nations. Dukes of Girt to be elected by vote of Free Males. Crown Anchorage rebuilt, "Crown- and-Anchor." Blood-Drinker Cult discovered among young males of White Smile garrison.

247 Finduilas' Fire. Wind and Water translated. Year of the Dukes' Fever. Irmilla Andros dances her Fight and Feast and Finish up some Fancy-Men. Sermian composes Song of Two Trees. First Dwarrow weapon-stalls.

248 Nelly Maigre's Songs and Satires and Satires. First Dwarrow carving-show.

265 The Chants of the Dwarves translated: Dwarrow protests.

266 Duke Ciryancar III founds Crown Scriptorium, with three librarians (Lady Seriol, later Duchess Seriol of the Songs, was first Librarian for Men, Grey Gilfalas the first for Elves—the only Grey-Elf ever to serve—and Spinster Thrawn the first for Dwarrow). Orfanael's High-Pitched Laughter from a Flying Horse. Electorate extended to include Free Female Householders.

281 Orfanael's Wine-Cask Masque-House, first play Leo Lebannin's The Duchess and the Elf, next Orfanael's Greed Persuaded, next Ardiana Lebannin's The Sea-Elf Princess and the King of all the Lands. Elvenharps Hall opened in Freeport. The Cult of Nysyen begins in Freeport and White Smile. Cult of Evnysyen in Hot Gates.

289 Gilfalas Blacknail (celibate daughter of Duchess Seriol) returns from sojourn with Dwarrow, founds Quean-School and Carl-School, the first of Gin's Singing-Schools of Man. Disappointed of her love, Grey Gilfalas founds the Prowess Games of All Races. Geba of Harad's Mask of Race, Orfanael's Bath-House Plays, Mamma Noa's Tragedy of the Golden King and the Gilded Paramour and The Hero's Lie.

290 Singing Bridge built between Crown-and-Anchor and Freeport. Temples of The One-Person founded in Hot Gates and Frecport Under-Bridge.

291 Vorondel's Even Clowns Weep Even Emperors Laugh, Elena's Mist. First Child's-Play: Quean-School's Children's Bridge.

295 Elena's Fishgut Justice. Carl-School's The Dumb Slave.

298 Quean-School's The Slave's Mistress banned, pirated. Mamma Noa's Tragedy of the Fish, the Fisherman and the Fish-knife.

299 Duke Cirion VI Greyfeather proclaims "Freedom of the People," ending slavery, and "The Tillers' Tithe," granting workers a share in their labour's gain. Orfanael's Last Play Last Laugh. Cult of the Triple Goddess appears in Walk-about and Crown-and-Anchor. Knife-dancing Cult begins in White Smile, Elementalist Cult at Hot Gates.

314 Corsair raids begin. Alliance of the

389 Three Peoples vowed at the Sphere of Harmony above Freeport.

389 Corsairs take White Smile. Grey Elves liberate galley-slaves.

400 Robry Elf-Friend (once a slave) discovers and destroys secret Corsair port-city at Drowned Vale. Jegrais (the Pirate Queen) and some twenty-score Corsairs escape inland.

[1307-1401] Corsair-Harad Wars: "First Tropic Wars."

435 Orcs brought to Girt by Corsairs as oarsmen and fighters.

444 Mages warned in dreams by Old Ones about overland invasion.

445 Battle of New Year's Day: Major Orc invasion repelled.

504 Duke Cirion XI caught by Orcs, crucified on Hot Gates South Cliff. "Magic" wave destroys Orcs, White Smile cliff swept undersea: the Geniuses' first intervention in Man's wars.

[1432—1447] Gondor's King-Strife.

539 Duchess Falassë welcomes refugees from the Northern war, irrespective of their loyalties. Gift of galleys from Umbar.

545 Falassë sends ships to help Castamir the Admiral.

[1447] Castamir d. Eldacar restored.

549 [1448] Eldacar proclaims the expulsion of Girt from the Empire of Gondor and Obloquy against Falassë. Girt Calendar adopted.

605 Pelagion's Alliance with the Old Ones against Orcs and Cold Ogres.

606 Alliance of the Four Peoples. Miryan III abdicates in favour of Pelagion. Orcs take Freeport.

699 Umbar takes Freeport, drives Orcs westward. Free Peoples retreat across Bloom Mountains to Inland Sea. Abers of Freckland settled. Geniuses contacted.

700 Freck Bridge, Maiden Castle founded.

701 Hyando of Umbar, Elix of Khand join the Free Peoples. Sebright of the Ships founded. Orcs defeated by Duke Vorondel's ambush at Earhole Pass.

702 Godsport, Sweetwater founded. Geniuses ally with Free Peoples. Orcs defeated at Freckland Abers.

[1603] Hyarmendacil II burns the Umbar fleet.

708 Rock Geniuses eradicate Black Tunnelers from Freck Isles and Vorondel Cliffs. Godsport Castle, Maiden Castle built. Free People and Genius leaders go secretly to the Sphere at Freeport to amend the Alliance: the Midnight Vow.

911 [1810] Telumehtar commands the sack of Umbar. Blood-Drinker Living Lord becomes ruler of the Ulmic Coast.

912 Freeport besieged by Blood-Drinkers, burned, librarians Ustcd Stonc-Ax, Luial Leaftip and Faramir Fairhand save Freeport Library by alliance with the Good Dragon, lltheor the Golden, and the Brown Mage.

914 Blood-Drinkers rebuild Freeport as "Life City," cast down the Sphere of Harmony into the sea. Second Tropic Wars begin.

[1835] Harad Black Guards capture Umbar, cast down the Crystal.

939 The Mistwood Treachery: lltheor and Air-Geniuses destroyed, Trcc-Geniuses decimated, by Blood-Drinker Dragons.

939—954 Refugees from Umbar swarm both coast and Inland. "The Hulks" prison-ships supply Life City.

951 Brown Mage opens Godsport Ninefold School. Blood-Drinkers attack across Bloom Mountains. Last Storm-Genius dies repelling them. Ducal elections by adult suffrage.

954 Duke Elix defeats Umbar fleet at Gulf Lee.

[1854] Serifes of Harad claims the Umbar throne. Corsair migrations.

957 Emissaries from Narmacil II of Gondor received in Godsport, but murdered in Life City as they return.

1009 Voroneia commands the besieging of Life City. Rock Geniuses break the Temple of the Blood-Drinkers. Hulks emptied.

1010 Life City cleansed. Rebuilding of "New Freeport" begins. Duchess Voroneia resigns, disappears.

1012 New Freeport, Crown-and-Anchor and Singing Bridge reopened. Gondor emissaries declare war, pronounce Obloquy on Elix II. Girt rejects Gondor's accusations and jurisdiction.

1012— Decay of Ulmic Coast trading cities.

1207 Sebright (Blue Robes), Freck Bridge (Belted) and Godsport (Brown and Grey) Colleges of Wizardry founded.

[2128] Steward Eradan sends emissaries to New Freeport and Inland.

1230 Emissaries coldly received in Freck Bridge and Godsport.

1300 Maiden Castle's Green-Robe College and Abersport Elementals College founded. One-Person Cult appears in Sebright, Cat Cult in Godsport.

1319 Goddess Cult develops on Orestaia Faos Island.

c. 1400 Umbar's Crystal Sphere washed up north of New Freeport.

1477 Alliance vows, sworn on the Sphere, renewed on the Crystal.

[2463] Istari come to New Freeport, seeking ancient artifacts.

1590 One-Person Priests claim their god's sovereignty of the Freck Islands. Annuial killed on Freckport Quays. Goddess worshippers, One-Person worshippers both secede. Damanir Felix elected Duke. Fanatics (both groups claim the atrocity) murder the thirty-one "unweaponed Elves" in Godsport.

1590-1593 Freck Islands War. Godsport besieged: Black Tunnelers damage Godspring beneath Castle. Alchemical Guild begins in Godsport and Maiden Castle.

1593 Explosion on Orestaia Faos. Island Cults collapse.

1618 First Great Drought. Cold Ogres attack Freck Bridge, defeated by Ogre Mages summoned by Felix I's mages.

1858 Second Great Drought. Elven Mark destroyed by fire.

1859 Ores and Cold Ogres attack Elven rebuilders, destroy Western Dryslopes. Old Ones and Geniuses aid the Elves.

1901 Duke Simonimon founds the Godsport Tournaments for prowess in all weapons, and open to all comers. Otter and Mara open unarmed combat school in Sebright. Inland Girt's first Religious Revival.

2078 Thorongil Northman, emissary of Ecthelion II of Gondor, wins Godsport Silver Sword and counsels Duchess Felicael against Necromantic Cultists.

2097 Eisil the Red becomes Governor and General of New Freeport, "discovers" financial corruption and suspends the assembly.

2106 Pangs of the Earth. Dwarrow days of lamentation. Savage Umbar raids on North Ulmic Coast. The Forty Assassinations: Assassins' Guild destroyed in Godsport. Inland's second Religious Revival.

2112 Eisil establishes New Freeport as capital of Ulmic Coast.

2114 Eisil wins civic vote to restrict citizenship to Men.

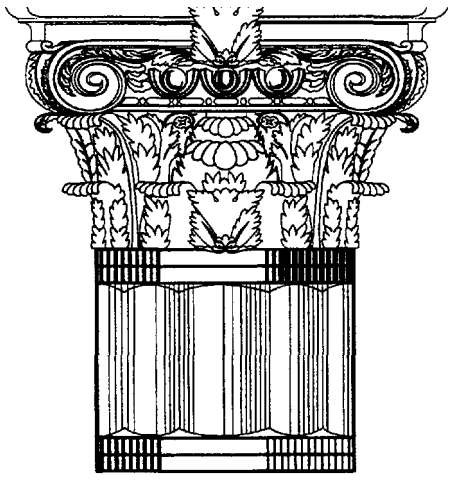
2115 Haradrim slaughter Old Ones on Gulf Lee Coast.

2117 Third Great Drought. Three Weather-Mages murdered. Ogre Mages disappear from Godsport's ducal Castle.

2118 New assassinations in Inland cities. Black Guard (mainly from Umbar) called in by Eisil. They seize control in the Tradeports, rob, torture and kill Elves and Dwarrow, and exile Old Ones. Blood-Drinkers worship in public again.

2119 Eisil declares war on Dwarrow and their allies. His Black Tunnelers breach Dwarrow treasury and smithies; Dwarrow retreat into Jenolan-the-Smith. Orcs burn Freck Bridge and Sebright of the Ships. Fishers of Sebright rally the Inland.

2120 Men and Elves of Inland, under Duke Felix IV of Godsport, defeat Orc army and Cold Ogres, then halt Eisil's army in the Bloom Mountains. When Eisil uses black blasting-powder, Rock Geniuses bring down the Crags of Wingspan upon his army (at the cost of their lives).



Winter in Ladros: Report on a First Age Campaign

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In Other Hands 1, I *wrote a lengthy article on how to set a Middle-earth campaign in times other than the Third Age. I will here proceed on that matter by describing a First Age campaign which was run in my gaming group during the spring of 1993.*

Campaign Summary

The adventures of a Beleriand campaign must necessarily be fairly unsophisticated, since the region lacks both cities and a complex or developed society. The political situation is also fairly simple, with a clear set of enemies and only a limited bickering among the Free Peoples. Altogether, we played eight adventures in this installment of the campaign. The game-masters,[1] being content with their creation, have decided to resume play in early 1994, at which point the characters will be drawn into the dramatic events of the Dagor Bragollach, hopefully surviving by fleeing south across Dorthonion.

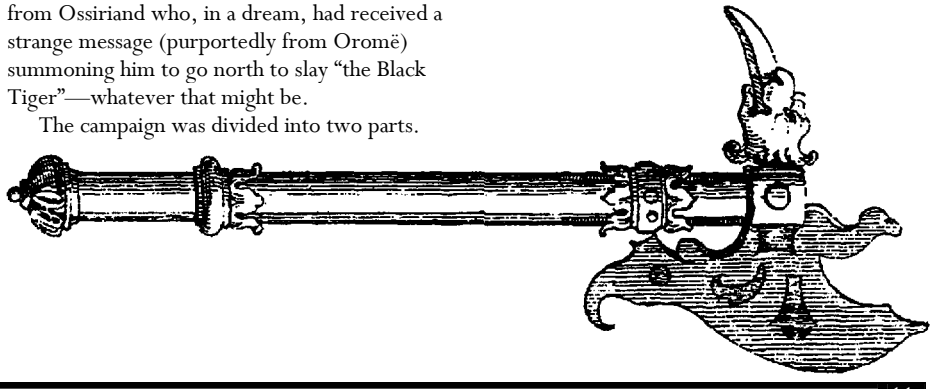
The campaign took place in or near a small Edain village in Ladros on the edge of Ard-galen in the winter of YS 454.[2] The main sources used in its design were *The Silmarillion* and Fonstad's *Atlas of Middle-earth* (the latter providing much useful climatic and geological data). The player-characters were mostly hunters and artisans from that settlement, though one of them had served as a tracker at Angrod's castle for many years. These characters were modeled on our Viking ancestors, albeit endowed with a more heroic set of skills. In the course of the first scenarios, there also appeared three Elven player-characters: a Noldo warrior of Maedhros' host' (a courier carrying a message form Maedhros to Aegnor), a Sinda warrior searching for his lost brother,[4] and one Laiquendi hunter from Ossiriand who, in a dream, had received a strange message (purportedly from Oromë) summoning him to go north to slay "the Black Tiger"—whatever that might be.

The campaign was divided into two parts. The first consisted of a series of adventures relating to the village. Wolves (with a Mannish or Elven leader) and Orcs were spotted in the neighborhood, and we spent much time trying to investigate their movements and possible intentions. One night, the village was attacked by a superior number of Orcs and wolves and there was a grand battle in the moonlight—to our surprise, only the wealthiest man of the village was abducted in the raid, and with great losses for the attackers.[5]

We decided to track his captors in order to find out what was going on. This pursuit led us out across Ard-galen in a way reminiscent of the Three Hunters' quest of *The Two Towers*. We discovered a fortress built some hundred miles southeast of Angband and commanded by someone judged to be Sauron. Before we could investigate closer, however, we were discovered by Orcs and had to flee homewards, pursued by a wolf pack with a human-looking master. Eventually, we were overtaken by the pursuers and there was a grand melee, in which our Noldo warrior slew the Wolfmaster, who turned out to be the Sinda's lost brother.[6]

The second part of the campaign began on the way back to the village, during which time we discovered three mounted Noldor of Aegnor's household that had been slain by some big and hideous fell beast (We immediately assumed that this must be the Black Tiger.). One of the corpses had a beautiful and very magical battleaxe that eminently suited the Laiquendi character.

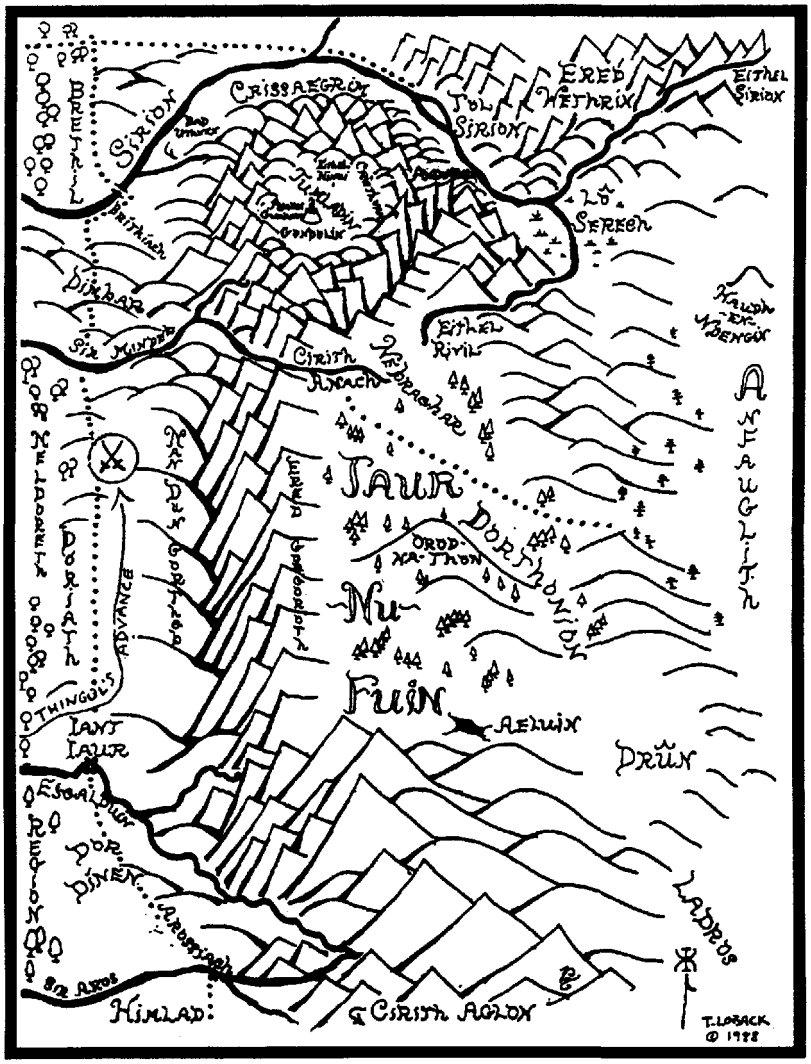
We decided to travel to Aegnor's castle to inform him of the event. That journey turned out to be unexpectedly strenuous, since we were harassed by a swarm of Orcs led by a sorcerer. Obviously,



he did not want us to reach our destination and was ready to spend the lives of his minions quite liberally to that end. Since the sorcerer could pinpoint our location through his fell arts, we finally dug in on a hilltop and staved off an attack by fifty Orcs, suffering only wounds while slaying around thirty foes and driving off the rest.

We snuck away at the first opportunity and made for a nearby Elvish fort, manned by fifty warriors, where we waited for an expected night attack. Some three hundred Orcs and one fell lynx-beast (the "Black Tiger"), led by the sorcerer, struck some hours before dawn. Again there was a grandiose battle during which much Orkish blood was shed. When dawn came, there were only a handful of defenders alive (including the player-characters), but everyone was very badly wounded. The sorcerer and his lynx-beast (killed by the magical axe) and about half his Orcs were dead, and the rest retreated in reasonable order when they heard the horns of Aegnor and his household knights coming to our rescue.

This brief summary does not entirely capture the mood of the campaign. We aimed to recreate the spirit of *The Silmarillion,* in which the Free Peoples fight a desperate and never-ending battle against the hordes of Evil, knowing that all their struggle may be futile, but yet not yielding.[7] The gamemasters and the players used a laconic style of speech and displayed much spectacular heroism to achieve this ambition (and for me it was a success—our last stand in the Elven fort actually reminded me of Leonidas and his Spartans fighting the Persians at Thermopylae).



CONCLUSIONS

To summarize my experiences of the campaign: Beleriand is a milieu eminently suitable for those that enjoy heroic fighting and wilderness adventures, but providing little opportunity for a more intellectual approach to gaming. The social environment is too primitive for complex political and criminal plots. On the other hand, considering the extraordinary abilities of the Beleriand figures described by J.R.R. Tolkien (e.g., Túrin and Huor), players can design awesome characters, far beyond what is suitable in a Third Age campaign.

There is ample room for excitement: the player-characters are usually fewer and better than their opponents, but must avoid being swamped by the superior numbers of a foe who does not care much about losing Orcs on the battlefield. There are other servants of Melkor who are far more awesome than any player-character (Remember that Balrogs appear in company formations at the Fall of Gondolin, and that Sauron himself walks the meadows of northern Beleriand in search of Morgoth's mightiest adversaries.).

Beleriand is famous for its quests. Even though players cannot repeat Beren and Lúthien's capture of a Silmaril, the gamemaster can easily invent similar but less awesome tasks for them, sending them to distant corners of Beleriand or even to the unknown lands east of the Blue Mountains. Considering the extreme level of violence in Beleriand at the end of the First Age, it is likely that a player-character group will suffer numerous casualties before completing their quest (Remember that even Beren fell before Carcharoth.). But, dying heroically, with a stoic and laconic last word to one's friends, should in itself be a notable accomplishment in the campaign context.

It is questionable whether Beleriand provides enough varied scenario opportunities for a very long campaign. My impression is that it ought to be better for the gamemaster to concentrate efforts on five to ten adventures, leading the players to a spectacular climax. Thereafter, the characters should retire, satisfied with their accomplishments in the fight against Morgoth.

ENDNOTES

1. The group consists of eight players, three of which are gamemasters who jointly develop and execute the campaigns, alternately rcfereeing the adventures. Hence the gamemasters, too, are allowed to play in their own creation. We use a modified *RuneQuest* system, since we believe it to be the most adaptable one designed so far.
2. The village was designed like a Swedish Iron Age village, with houses of wood and a log palisade.
3. He wore a very good set of weapons and armor, which actually had been made long ago in Aman under Melkor's tutelage. However, the warrior did not part with that information, it being privy to the gamemasters.
4. Actually one of Eöl's apprentices, though that was not generally known.
5. That is to say, he owned the most pigs and the biggest house (coins and similar tokens of wealth not being used by Edain of the First Age).
6. We guessed that he had been captured by the Enemy and had gotten his will broken. However, we never found out why the rich villager had been abducted.
7. A similar mentality was found among our pagan Norse ancestors, described in their sagas and myths which we Swedes read in grammar school. Hence we know it fairly well.

The Orthanc Fellowship: Notes on a Fourth Age Campaign

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The birth of Other Hands *has created a welcome forum for others, like us, who found themselves co-creators and guests in Middle-earth years ago by combining role-playing and the genius of J.R.R. Tolkien. It seems to us that it would be especially interesting to know how and where others have enjoyed exploring, co-creating and adventuring in Middle-earth. We would, therefore, like to share the same by presenting summaries of our own adventures in Tolkien's world. So long as readers find them to be useful and interesting, we hope to describe more adventures in the future.*

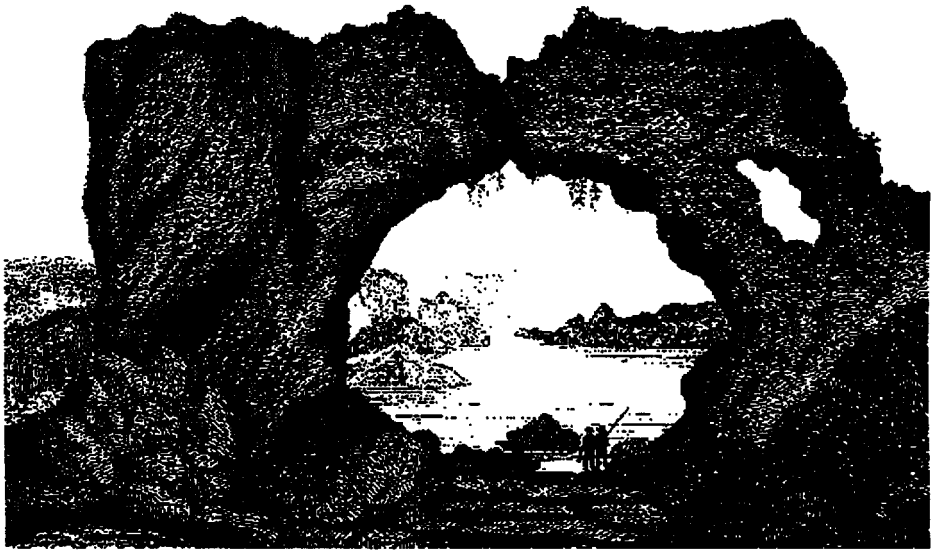
Ten years ago, we had been playing *AD&D* for more than several years and had experimented with some other systems for role-playing. Outside of the game, we maintained a steady diet of fantasy literature and occasionally tried to weave new worlds into the main fabric of our never-ending story of adventure in the world of Greyhawk. Individually, we found ourselves turning again and again to *The Lord of the Rings, The Hobbit, The Silmarillion* and anything about Middle-earth we could find. Finally, one of us (Joe Balderson) volunteered to DM some Middle-earth adventures.

We decided to continue role-playing with the old *AD&D* system. For all it's difficulties, we had found it was the only system everyone knew well and therefore easy to adapt to other systems and worlds. We began our setting several human generations into the Fourth Age, so that the War of the Ring should be in recent memory and the world not too different from the version we were most familiar with. This allowed us some flexibility to co-create and adventure without careening into stories whose courses and outcomes have already been well documented.

We developed characters that had some slight connection to those created by Professor Tolkien himself, which allowed us to feel like we had a place in Middle-earth, but not yet too important. This worked well, for as we gained experience and influence, these connections became more important than we had anticipated.

We have always role-played characters in one continuous game, not knowing precisely where one adventure or module began or ended, allowing the DM and player-characters equal input on their fate. We treated the Middle-earth party of adventurers the same way. We used a combination of spontaneous adventures suggested by the characters, adventures designed by the DM, and modules published by ICE. To the credit of our DM, the story appeared seamless. We played on every Sunday (following football, spaghetti, Logan's Sausage, and beer) for almost a decade.

Fortunately, we kept a journal of our adventures as we went, so between the journal and the DM's notes we are able to reconstruct a



great deal of our own history and adventures. Unfortunately, we didn't begin keeping this journal until the characters were mid-level, so much of our early adventures are lost.

The party of good characters eventually came to explore Orthanc, through ICE's *Isengard* module adapted and set in the Fourth Age by the DM. They took up residence there and came to call themselves the Orthanc Fellowship. Thus the adventures and plots described here, from the combined perspective of DM and player, are those described in the journal: *The Journeys of the Orthanc Fellowship*.

We present the plots and adventures here in several spirits: that of tale-swapping, information-sharing, and as potential ideas for other referees and players. Some of them worked extremely well. We hope our adventures can be picked up and inserted into other Middle-earth campaigns. (As most Middle-earth role-players understand, good adventures must suit the story and the characters.) We hope, however, that these ideas may inspire others, and we too would like to know of the adventures of others in Middle-earth. So that the adventures we describe may be more easily understood, we'll present the characters for whom they are written:

Aldamir Eldarion (S. Tree-jewel of the Eldar)—an Elven ranger; one of the Moriquendi whose family was named after one of the Eldar.

Beleg Naug (S. Mighty Dwarf)—a Dwarvcn fighter and cleric to Aulë; a distant relation of Durin.

Fëanor Greymon—a ranger and archer of Númenórean descent from Ciryacandor in the deep South.

Gladflius Finnedell—an Elvcn fighter and thief of Mirkwood with a dangerous passion for gambling.

Kephron Golendar—a Maiar spirit and wizard sentenced to champion the laws of Men on Middle-earth (or was Middle-earth sentenced to endure him?).

Lahk—a Númenórean magic-user and cleric influenced by the teachings of Estë; an expert on fine pipe-weed.

Silmar Breredin—a "brilliant" Noldor paladin of Lóricn who willingly sacrifices himself for the cause of good.

Very few details arc remembered about the early adventures. The very first we remember is the party of characters meeting for the first time just outside Minas Tirith at some version of the "Green Dragon Inn." Traveling west through Rohan they later met Kephron Golendar and promptly investigated the burning of his wizard's guild, testing their skills on Orc-arsonists. By the time we had explored Isengard, both players and DM had become especially attached to the campaign and we began writing our journal. Our first recorded adventure, which is briefly described below, is now called "The Journey to find the Entwives."

This adventure was brought up by Aldamir Eldarion's player. On his sabbaticals in Fangorn Forest, his character had come to know Quickbeam the Ent. As the two became closer friends, Aldamir was told the sad tale of how the Entwives were estranged from the Ents. He learned that the Entwives crossed the Anduin and tended their favorite plants—small trees, grasses, fruit trees, flowers, and vegetables. The Entwives had been honored by Men of that region now known as the Brown Lands, to whom they taught many skills of agriculture. But, by the end of the Second Age, their gardens were destroyed and they had vanished.

As players, we were very enthusiastic to save the world. Aldamir's player was so moved by this sad tale that he convinced his friends and fellow adventuring companions, the Orthanc Fellowship, to search for the Entwives. The fellowship agreed upon this mighty quest with great hope.

Aldamir returned to Quickbeam with his plans and enthusiasm. Quickbeam, in turn, was deeply moved by this gesture of kindness from his Elven friend; so much so, in fact, that the DM had Quickbeam entrust into Aldamir's care a special pollen. Assuming that the Onodrim reproduce through pollination, this pollen could then be used in case the Fellowship found the Entwives but could not convince them to return to Fangorn.

This is primarily an outdoor adventure that can be used to discover new lands in eastern Middle-earth. The DM set the Entwives far into the East so that the characters had to cross the continent, allowing the creation of cultures Professor Tolkien had not described in great detail. The Fellowship learned about these through many encounters with both hostile and friendly—for a little spice, however, I always recommend throwing in some wonderfully evil creatures for the characters to encounter on the way there and back again.

Weaving Magical Realism Through Nature

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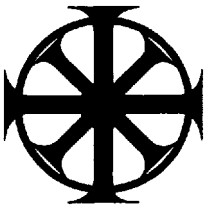
"Dawn take you all and be stone to you!" said a voice that sounded like William's. But it wasn't. For just at that moment the light came over the hill, and there was a mighty twitter in the branches. William never spoke for he stood turned to stone as he stooped; and Bert and Tom were stuck like rocks as they looked at him. And there they stand to this day, all alone, unless the birds perch on them; for trolls, as you probably know, must be underground before dawn, or they go back to the stuff of the mountains they are made of, and never move again. That is what happened to Bert and Tom and William.[1]



It is traditional in fairy tales for the sight of the sun to be fatal to trolls, and so it is in Tolkien's world. It was nature itself that condemned poor Tom. This illustrates a pattern of magic in Middle-earth. We are more likely to think of Tolkien's world as full of wonder than of magic. This is because magic is primarily natural or visualized through natural occurrences or elements. As Men and Hobbits (which Tolkien specifically describes as non-magical) we must often ask *was it magic or was it nature?* We call the symbiotic relationship between magic and nature in Middle-earth "magical realism."

There are many examples of magical realism in Middle-earth. The sun is perhaps one of the most prominent, itself created by the Valar out of magical and natural resources. Its light was created from the last fruit of Laurelin, one of the Two Trees of Valinor, and was placed in a vessel made by Aulë and guided through the heavens by Arien. Just as it could turn trolls to stone, it would also weaken other servants of Melkor. Yet even its strength is drawn from natural magic.

In the chapter from *The Hobbit* entitled "On The Doorstep," Tolkien uses the sun as a way to help unlock the secret dwarven door at the Lonely Mountain. While on the doorstep the thrush gives a sign by cracking snails on the grey stone. As the sun sinks into the west, a beam of its light shines upon the wall and a flake of rock splits off, making a keyhole visible to Bilbo and the Dwarves. If there are spells involved here, then they are ancient and invisible to the adventurers experiencing them.

While the sun seems to have many magical properties, other forms of nature illustrate magical realism in Tolkien's world. A good example is the enchanted river in Mirkwood. There is a possibility that Elves enchanted the river, but in an encounter described in *The Hobbit,* it seems to be the river itself that causes the hungry Bombur to fall asleep after falling in. Naturally, he does not sleep without dreams:

> "I was having such beautiful dreams. I dreamed I was walking in a forest rather like this, only lit with torches on the trees and lamps swinging from the branches and fires burning on the ground; and there was a great feast going on, going on for ever. A woodland king was there with a crown of leaves, and there was a merry singing, and I could not count or describe the things there were to eat and drink."[2]

Although it seems to be his hunger which prompts the dream, the river carries an enchantment. Anyone who drinks or bathes in the river will dream of Elven feasts and suffer memory lapses. The enchantment of sleep is not permanent, but when Bombur awakens he cannot remember anything after the Unexpected Party. His encounter with the river only leaves him with a sleepy forgetfulness.

The Bruinen river that surrounds most of Rivendell seems to be a means of illustrating the realism of Elven magic. During the War of the Ring, Frodo, in an attempt to escape the Nazgûl, crosses the Ford of Bruinen. As the Nazgûl pursue, their mounts are drowned in a sudden flood and their spirits are sent back to their master in Mordor. This flood, with many great white horses riding its crest, is seemingly magical. It is known that Elrond commanded the flood with help from Gandalf (and, quite possibly, from Nenya, the Ring of Water):

> "Who made the flood?" asked Frodo.
>
> "Elrond commanded it," answered Gandalf. "The river of this valley is under his power, and it will rise in anger when he has great need to bar the Ford. As soon as the captain of the Ringwraiths rode into the water the flood was released. If I may say so, I added a few touches of my own: you may not have noticed, but some of the waves took the form of great white horses with shining white riders; and there were many rolling and grinding boulders."[3]

A considerable amount of magical realism in Tolkien's world is revealed among the Elves. To Men and Hobbits, it is not particularly clear whether Elves are more natural or magical. Elves are the Firstborn race of Arda and were conceived by Ilúvatar alone in the third theme of Ainulindalë. They are the eldest and most noble of the speaking races of Arda. This may be why many of the uses of magical realism are focused so commonly through them. Tolkien

always portrays Elves as having one foot in another world, yet very close to nature in Middle-earth.

Other creatures demonstrate Tolkien's magical realism as well. The forests, in particular, have characteristics which seem very magical, and yet they have always been thus. The Old Forest is a small remnant of a forest that at one time covered most of Eriador. The trees are malevolent and mobile near the Whithywindle, and so it seems to the Hobbits, although they can never be sure of it. Tolkien's description always allows the possibility that the forest is simply dense and difficult to navigate as the Hobbits walk, drawn unavoidably to Old Man Willow. The true nature of the forest is only made clear when Old Man Willow attacks the Hobbits as they rest.

Fangorn also is a home of very strange and mythical creatures, the Ents. Like Old Man Willow, Ents are capable of speech, but Ents can walk and seem friendlier than the trees of the Old Forest. Yet when they are angry they can cause quite a bit a damage. For instance, they reduced the walls of Isengard to rubble during the War of the Ring. They are, naturally, legendary to the people of Rohan: "A legend of Rohan!" cried Legolas. "Who is this Treebeard?"[4] Answering Legolas, Gandalf replies:

> "Ah! now you are asking much," said Gandalf. "The little that I know of his long slow story would make a tale for which we have no time now. Treebeard is Fangorn, the oldest living thing that still walks beneath the sun upon this Middle-earth."[5]

Ents are trees inhabited by the spirits of Yavanna, the Vala whose sphere of influence is growing things with roots in the ground. The Ents are to us perhaps the most unusual of the races on Middle-earth, but are yet as natural as they are strange.

The most awesome instances of magical realism through nature are those summoned by the Valar and Maiar. For example, when the First and Second Ages ended, earthquakes and floods changed the face of Arda.

It has been said that there is only limited magic in Tolkien's world, and it is true that much of the magic that remains by the Fourth Age (or even the Third) is held only by ancient races, places, and artifacts. Yet it is the nature of magic in Middle-earth to be unobvious. As we study the use of magic, we discover there is much more than we had imagined. Thus, the Fourth Age may have room for more than we know.

This is particularly exciting for players and referees. We enjoy Middle-earth in part because it is unlike our own world, and we enjoy characters with skills we cannot have. Tolkien's magical realism allows for a great deal of magic limited only in how it works and is perceived. Players may feel free to role-play magic-user characters, though as we watch Gandalf closely, much of his magic was of the obvious kind: fireworks and combat spells included. Yet he was nearly as much a druid as a wizard, and players and referees must take care that magic be described through it's most natural effects, allowing for uncertainty. Gandalf's use of magic, however, will prove to be the most common exception to natural magical realism, as we will suggest in future articles.

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Exile and Return in Tolkien's World

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Whether by intentional design or not, a common theme appears throughout the pages of Tolkien's works dealing with Middle-earth: that of the return of certain characters from self-imposed exile, banishment, or even death. This article examines the exile/return motif as a plot device and opportunity for character development in a role-playing context.

Exile/return motifs can generally be approached from one of two perspectives: 1) protagonists attempt to keep antagonists from returning, or 2) protagonists themselves attempt to return from exile in the face of opposition from antagonists. Such themes can be put to good use in a game by providing plenty of intrigue for players or, similarly, by adding more role-playing potential to a situation as characters investigate what has transpired in their absence. A villain once thought dead can add drama to certain situations by being brought back into the game at an unexpected moment as a living menace or perhaps as an undead.

There are, of course, limitations when it comes to the use of exile/return motifs in a campaign. Constantly bringing back characters and peoples from banishment or defeat could become too predictable if the tactic was overused by a GM. Characters might be tempted to act with reckless abandon if their players can expect that there is a likelihood resolving the dilemma, irregardless of their actions in the present.

In contrast to game settings where resurrecting deceased characters is commonplace, Death in Middle-earth has a finality to it which places considerable restrictions upon future prospects for return. However, on rare occasions circumstances do arise which enable the transcendence of Death, as with the Oathbreakers in the Paths of the Dead or the nine kings cursed with a serial deathlessness as wraiths. To be sure, such situations can be entertaining but should be handled with great care so as to maintain game balance: after all, characters who become immortal could upset the balance of any game because of their great power.

Holding Back the Return of the Shadow

The relentless resurgence of evil is a central feature of Tolkien's imagined history, and this theme is perhaps best exemplified in the character of Sauron. Beginning with the defeat of his master at the end of the First Age, Sauron wastes little time in filling Morgoth's shoes, continuously returning to threaten the Free Peoples throughout the Second and Third Ages until his own final destruction in the War of the Ring.

In Eregion, Sauron deceives the Elven-smiths in the guise of Annatar, "the Lord of Gifts." He reappears after a thousand years of the Third Age as the Necromancer of Dol Guldur, driven out briefly by the White Council but returning in secret to occupy his fastness in Mirkwood for another five centuries. Finally, the Dark Lord succeeds in resuming his ancient enthronement in the Black Land, heralding the beginning of the end of the age.

In a campaign of extreme importance, PCs might assist Gandalf and the White Council in removing Sauron from his perch in southern Mirkwood. There is also the possibility of a campaign centered on the foundation of the realms-in-exile by the Faithful under Elendil's leadership in the face of Sauron's efforts to annihilate them. During the Second Age

Númenórean adventurers might aid their lesser brethren in Middle-earth against the rise of Sauron's fledgling empire.

It is surely a telling sign of the importance of the theme of recurring evil that the only story Tolkien ended up writing concerning the otherwise undefined Fourth Age was entitled "The New Shadow," which dealt with yet another resurgence of the otherwise definitively defeated legacy of Sauron. In his article "Beyond the Third Age: Role-playing in all ages of Arda" (OH 1: 7-19), Anders Blixt offers one possible framework for a campaign based on the shadow's latest return.

Sauron's evil returns in the form of his daughter, Aelindur, who has survived since the Second Age. Aelindur uses her cunning and magic to great effect, especially to entice Southron and Dunlending peoples to regain territory lost to Gondor in the time of the War of the Ring. Since the Istari and the more powerful Elven leaders have left the world, her threat is even more pronounced. If a GM were to run such a campaign, perhaps Galadriel and Elrond or one of the more powerful wizards could return to assist characters if Gondor were to fall under Aelindur's dominion.

Fighting the Dark Lord's Minions

In the course of the struggle against Morgoth or his servants, it is often the case that protagonists will find themselves displaced from their beloved homeland and on the run. Under such circumstances, the immediate (and realistic) goal is not to wholly annihilate the shadow, but to recover from its grip what has been lost. This heroic form of resistance is most pronounced during the First and Third Ages, when the Free Peoples are more often than not on the defensive in the face of superior odds.

The wars of Beleriand form the archetype of this kind of struggle, when the Valar abandoned Middle-earth to the dominion of Angband, because of the rebellion of the Noldor. The guerrilla bands led by heroes such as Barahir or Túrin, driven from their homelands into a hostile wilderness by the servants of Morgoth, are emblematic of the "Evil Years" of the First Age. As Anders Blixt suggests, campaigns set in this environment would require PCs to be able to survive a mercilessly cold climate while battling a seemingly unstoppable foe (OH 1: 11). A parallel situation may be found in the Third Age during the loosing battle of the Men of the North against the might of the Witch-king of Angmar.

Capture by the enemy is another ever-present danger facing desperate resisters, since not all prisoners are slain. Some are carried off to Angband to have their will broken by Morgoth's power, so that they may be sent back to their homeland as unwitting spies. Such returned prisoners might be PCs, or friends of PCs, whose former comrades must now discern whether they can still be trusted.

In the later Third Age, many of Morgoth's surviving minions are scattered over (and under) the face of Middle-earth and masterless. The dragon Smaug drives Durin's folk out of the Lonely Mountain, as does the re-awakened Balrog of Moria. In campaigns reminiscent of Thorin and Balin's quests to recover their mansions from their foes, PCs could participate in the cleansing of Moria after the events of the War of the Ring.

The Dominion of Men

Many of the exiles and returns that take place in the history of Middle-earth have nothing to do with the Dark Lord or his minions (even when these may inadvertently benefit from the weakening of their foes thereby). In particular during the Second and early Third Ages, the loss or recovery of one's own is caused not by superhuman malice, but by the evil that Men do to themselves and each other.

The power-hungry Númenóreans who came to Middle-earth in search of wealth and spoil subjected many lesser Men to a rule hardly distinguishable from that of Sauron. A campaign set in this violent age could assume the perspective of one of these oppressed peoples, struggling to drive their unwanted rulers back over the sea (only to be faced with the rival empire of Sauron should they succeed).

Early in the Third Age, the vanquished but still dangerous Black Númenórean lords of Umbar fought on for nearly a century to reclaim their haven from its investiture by the followers of Elendil, before they were utterly destroyed in 1050 by King Hyarmendacil — or were they?

PCs wishing to assist these exiled lords in regaining a measure of their former power in Umbar or elsewhere face many challenges.

Umbar continues to play a pivotal role in the drama of exile and return following the Kin-strife, when the returning King Eldacar forces his enemies to abandon Gondor for the sanctuary of their kinsman's power in the south. As the Corsairs of Umbar, these rebels spend the next three hundred and sixty-two years trying to regain the throne of Gondor (or at least to take cruel revenge upon its inhabitants for their exile). The originating event of the Kin-strife is itself an ideal setting for protagonists seeking to return or antagonists seeking to hinder them.

Metallurgy in the Third Age

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The sections on Dwarven and Elven technology which appear in the Moria *and* Lórien MERP *supplements, are, to say the least, woefully garbled. So too is the new* Alchemy Law *for* Rolemaster, from *which I was interested to learn that swords are made by the three-step process of hammering, tempering (in order to relieve them of their resulting toughness and brittleness), and quenching the red-hot metal in cold water (in order to harden it).*

Well, yes, sort of. But if you do this, then off you go to your first battle and your sword snaps in half because you've done it all in the wrong order. As it is a hopeless task to sort out these tangles, I will begin from scratch with some real science, and some other musings.

One of the many problems to be faced in incorporating science into any literary fantasy is that while the imaginary world seems to have evolved politically and socially over the timescale of the book's narrative, its technology has remained the same for centuries (which is historically unlikely). In the case of Middle-earth, the level of military technology has even declined from the First Age to the Third.

At Agincourt, for example, the longbow may have reigned supreme, but primitive cannons were present and, within fifty years, there was a severe shortage of trained bowmen in the English army, despite laws compelling able-bodied men to practice every Sunday. The main reason for the development of firearms was the speed with which (in a few mere weeks) a man could be instructed in their use (by contrast to the lifetime training required to master the bow). The longbow used at Agincourt was in fact a more powerful weapon even than a Napoleonic musket in terms of range and rate of fire.

Perhaps due to authorial prejudice, it may be that the ruling hierarchy and intellectuals of Gondor scorned science, leaving it to Saruman with his mind of metal and machines; even so, one would have thought that the constant state of war in Gondor would have precipitated the some concentration of effort towards the development of a suitable defence technology. Gunpowder is not difficult to invent, and the Dúnedain would certainly have had the steel for firearms.[1]

Apart from Gondor, we know that the Dwarves and Noldor smiths of Eregion were fine craftsmen, but elsewhere there is little evidence that there was a sufficiently settled culture to enable fundamental research to be carried out. We could assume that the turbulent history of Middle-earth precluded the buildup of a knowledge base, that the Valar preferred to keep the Children of Ilúvatar blissfully ignorant, seeing what a mess they could make of the place as it was.

Ranking Metallurgical Technology in Middle-Earth

Metals have crystalline structures which account for most of their physical and metallurgical properties. Line defects in these crystals, called dislocations, are able to flow within the crystal, rendering it malleable. All pure metals are therefore soft, and some can even be pulled apart by hand.

In order to strengthen a metal, it is necessary to prevent the dislocations from flowing, which is done by filling the crystal with obstacles of one sort or another. However, these obstacles must be cleverly controlled so that they don't promote crack growth (which will leave the metal brittle). Alloy production then, is a contest between a high strength and a low toughness, unless by luck you get both at the same time.[2]

The production of good, hard steel from iron ore has been of great technological importance for centuries, but it is only really in our own century that chemistry and metallurgy have found out why the various bits of black magic work.[3] How much of this would the peoples of Middle-earth have known? The *Gazetteer* tells us that amongst the races of Men, only the Dúnedain have mastered the secrets of steel, while others make do with poor iron. Even so, it would seem that only the Elves of Eregion and the Dwarves have progressed beyond steel to more exotic alloys (e.g., mithril).[4]

Metals may be ordered according to the difficulty of smelting them and the knowledge and technology required to produce useful alloys from them.

Level I: Brass and Bronze

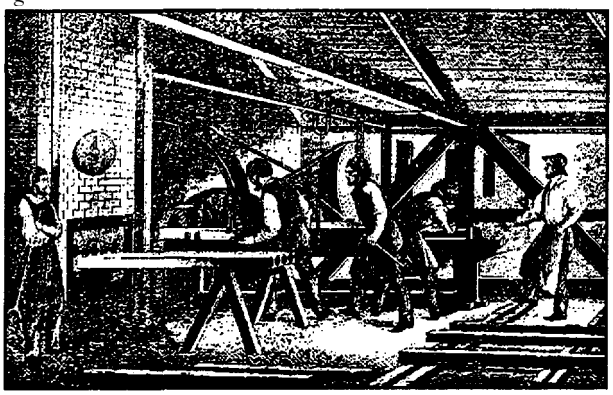
The easiest metals to smelt are those which occur naturally.[5] The earliest alloys were, not surprisingly, alloys of copper: brass (a mixture of copper and zinc) and bronze (a mixture of copper and tin). Both could easily have been discovered by smelting zinc or tin and copper-bearing minerals in the same fire. Brasses have a strength up to 700 MN m—2, with good ductility in the annealed condition, and will readily work-harden up to 200 VHN. Bronzes are gen-

erally slightly stronger and harder than brass, but less ductile, widely used for sword blades in Roman times. Bronze will keep an edge longer than brass.

In Middle-earth, bronze is probably used mostly for coinage, as iron will have percolated even to the more primitive cultures, although bronze would continue to be used where corrosion is a problem (e.g., on boats).

Level 2: Wrought Iron

In the days before the blast furnace was invented, iron could not be heated hot enough to melt. Blooms of a mixture of fairly pure iron with graphite particles could be produced by heating solid ore and charcoal in a hearth-type furnace. In order to make a piece of strong metal, these blooms were then hammered flat while red-hot, folded, reheated, and refolded until a laminate of steel and carbon was produced. This was known as wrought iron.[6]



The strength and the toughness of the steel was related to the number of times the metal was hammered and folded, as the slag particles trapped in the bloom were broken up into small harmless pieces. The lamination process itself would also have increased the toughness. The finished sword would be quenched and tempered (the correct temperature being judged by the color of the hot metal—from straw to dark blue).

The art of making that best steel would lead to the best craftsmen being able to command an extremely high price for their goods. Wrought iron is certainly much stronger and harder than bronze or brass, partly due to the impurities. For casting purposes with low toughness requirements, cast iron with around 4% C (i.e., which could be melted) would be used.

This would have been the highest level of technology before the arrival in Middle-earth of the Eldar and the Númenóreans. Even in the Third Age, this kind of process would be used for small-scale metalwork, village smiths making horseshoes and knives, or in Orc-holds in the Misty Mountains. Before they allied themselves with Gondor, the Éothéod would also have been at this level of technology, as would Arnor and Cardolan after the end of the North-Kingdom. The Shire would not have wanted blast furnaces belehing out smoke all day, and the Hobbits were sophisticated enough to get supplies of good steel from the Dwarves of the Blue Mountains.

Level 3: Cold-Work

Other metals such as Nickel will be smeltable, and nickel-copper alloys such as that used for coinage in Britain and the US, would be available. These are hardened by cold-work, so that ductility and toughness are inversely proportional to strength. They may be used as plating, for a cheap alternative to silver to make keys, and in applications for which corrosion resistance is needed, such as boiler tubes and maritime uses. Their strength is similar to a medium-carbon steel, 600-1000 MN m-2, with a hardness up to 300 VHN, but much more ductility for the strength than the steel.[7]

This would be the level of metallurgy found in Gondor, Arnor, Isengard, all Dwarf-holds, and most large Elven communities, especially among Noldor. Sauron, having the Cracks of Doom as a ready source of heat, would have gained this knowledge.

Level 4: Carbon Steel

"Pure" iron can be made from blast furnace "pig iron" by melting it in an open furnace and skimming off the impurities as they rise to the top. This technique is called "puddling." Blocks of pure iron would then be forged and formed while in a hot, soft, solid state, or cast into molds and left to cool. The iron would then be packed into boxes of charcoal in order to absorb carbon into the surface layer (and, hence, to adjust the strength based on its carbon content). Once quenched, this layer would be extremely hard, and the softer core would prevent it becoming too brittle.

This combination of hardness and toughness would be ideal for swords. Strengths up to 1000 MN m-2 can be produced with good toughness and surface hardnesses up to 600 VHN are achievable. Certain simple alloy steels, with manganese or nickel for higher toughness or impact resistance could also be made. These would probably be discovered by using impure ores rather than deliberate research, however. Tool steels, using tungsten, might also be produced with a hardness of 1000 VHN.

With the aid of water power, many forming operations become possible. Rolling, hot and cold-forging (hammering into shaped dies), extrusion (like a tube of toothpaste) to make wire, rod and bar *(Alchemy Law,* please note! NOT drawing of crystals form a melt!) could all be used, although this would require a very stable culture, as the capital cost of the equipment would be expensive.

I would doubt that anywhere except Moria and Mordor would possess such facilities. Nowhere else would be able to make large beams, as they would be limited by furnace and crucible size.

Level 5: Aluminum and Titanium Alloys

Skills which come into the highest category would be those for mass-producing steels to a defined composition with high cleanliness and low impurity content, and knowing the complex heat treatments needed to produce strengths of 3000 MN m-2 from steel, or to produce nickel alloys which would hold their strength at white-heat. Of similar complexity are the difficulties of smelting aluminum, which will require electrical power form somewhere, or else magic, and titanium which has to be melted in a vacuum furnace to avoid contamination with oxygen.

There is a vast array of aluminum and titanium alloys, mostly used as replacements for steels on weight grounds, despite the cost and lower stiffness. Aluminum alloys are limited to about 600 MN m—2 but their specific strength is usually about 50% better than a steel, saving a third of the weight. They are also limited to 100<C, due to the pure metal's low melting point and the strengthening techniques, mostly age-hardening. Titanium alloys can operate up to 1000<C, and have much higher strengths, up to 1400 MN m—2. The stiffness of titanium is low, however, so this metal would not be so good for sword blades, as they would bend easily.

Mithril, whose metallurgy is a whole article in itself, would seem to me to be an fcc metal like aluminum or nickel or possibly a bcc metal like titanium, certainly able to form strong, stiff, tough alloys with these elements, so as to produce light sword blades and armour. In its pure state, it would be soft and malleable and able to be beaten like copper and polished like gold.[8]

The knowledge of this metal, let alone its metallurgy, has been lost to us for millennia and was probably extremely rare in Middle-earth. Only the Elves of Lórien and the Dwarves of Moria would have had that knowledge in the Third Age.[9] The places and times when the secrets of aluminum, titanium and mithril alloys were to be found have mostly been destroyed: Gondolin, Númenor, Eregion and Celebrimbor's smiths, the Dwarves of Moria.[10]

Summary

For most gaming purposes, the best alloys will be steel found in Gondor or the Lonely Mountain (Level 4). Characters from outside these areas will only have access to lower-quality weapons, except at very high prices. A sword that was made in Moria or Eregion from the finest and most secret materials and recipes (Level 5), will be extremely rare and valuable. Dwarves and Elves are likely to keep these to themselves rather than trade them. Frodo's coat was worth more than the Shire, a sword of similar material would have been worth much the same.

Excursus: Metallurgical Terms

The major properties of metals of interest to the role-player are those pertaining to weapons and armour: the strength, stiffness and toughness of a blade, the durability of its edge, the resistance of armour to weapons, and the weight of the item in question. These properties are here formally defined in metallurgical terms, along with the techniques commonly used to produce or alter them.

Properties

Strength: the force which must be applied to break the metal in tension. For pure, single-crystal iron, this is 250 MN m—2, for a typical carbon steel, this is about 800 MN m—2 and for the newest strongest steels, this is up to 3000 MN m—2. Some materials have high compressive strength, but low tensile strength. Since steels are all mostly iron (or elements near iron on the Periodic Table) they are roughly the same density—around eight times that of water; however, their critical property is specific strength (that is, the strength/weight ratio). The weight of components may be brought down considerably by using a higher-strength steel. A modern example is that of drinking cans, where about half and half are made of aluminum and steel, because they work out at about the same cost and weight, despite the fact that aluminum is a much lighter metal.

Stiffness: otherwise known as the Youngus or Elastic modulus, is the ration of the force applied to the % extension measured. This is similar for most steels, being a property of the majority constituent, iron, and is about 211 GN m—2.

Toughness: a more slippery concept, being the opposite of brittleness. By pulling apiece of metal apart under tension, and plotting the force against extension, toughness may be related to the area under the curve, which is the work done to fracture the specimen. A higher work done means that the metal is less likely to fracture catastrophically. Another way of measuring work to fracture is with an impact test. A small specimen is put against an anvil, and a large weighted pendulum swings down and breaks it. The energy taken to break the metal may be measured as the difference in height between the beginning of the swing and the end. This gravitational energy has been absorbed in the metal. The impact test is easy to perform and gives an accurate measure of the impact resistance of the metal. A brittle metal will absorb perhaps 20J, while a tough piece will absorb 250J. Toughness is not a definite property of a metal, but is dependent upon the heat-treatments applied to it, the amount of corrosion and wear of the surface, etc.

Hardness: may be measured by scratching one thing with another and establishing a hierarchy or what scratches what. This is the Mohr scale, with diamond at the top at an arbitrary value of 10. A more quantitative measure is the Vickers hardness test, where a diamond is pushed into the surface of the metal by a known force, and the area of indentation is measured. The smaller the area, the harder the metal. Typical values for steels range from 200 in the annealed state to 600 in the severely-quenched state.

Ductility: a measure of the amount of work-hardening that a metal can undergo before it becomes brittle land breaks. It is measured as the % extension at failure in a tensile test.

Techniques

Work-hardening: the more you deform a piece of metal, the harder it gets, until it breaks. Its toughness goes down, while its strength goes up.

Annealing: heating your work-hardened sword at 1000<C for an hour or two, to soften back to a state where you can hammer it some more. Several cycles of annealing and working will increase the strength and toughness together.

Quenching: take one red-hot piece of metal, drop in bucket of water, with various secret ingredients added for their mystical power: blood, urine of clergyman, sacrificed lamb, slave or whatever, wait until fizzing stops, and remove. Warning: the piece of metal will be very hard and brittle.

Tempering: heating at various temperatures for sufficient time for a quenched piece of metal to decline in strength to the value desired. This raises the toughness, unless you do it too much. Quench and tempering is a process unique to steels because of a quirk of iron's metallurgy. Mankind is very lucky that such a useful metal should also be relatively easy to smelt.

Age-hardening: This is an equivalent process to tempering in nonferrous alloys, except that the metal starts out soft and weak, rather than hard and brittle. The purpose is to take a supersaturated solid solution and warm it up, so that some of the solute precipitates out as very fine particles in the metal. These increase the strength, while not encouraging brittleness, as large particles would. The aim is still to change the strength and toughness until they are within desired values.

Endnotes

1. This may suggest a *casus belli*. Perhaps Gondor had obtained high-grade iron ore or coal from the Haracl, and that with the loss of Umbar, it had been forced to rely upon scarcer supplies or lower-grade materials, and hence suffered a technological setback. Innumerable plot devices along the lines of the politics of technology spring to mind. Furthermore, the barren, desolate landscape of Mordor with many holes for Hobbits to hide in and polluted streams sound to me as if there had been extensive open cast mining in the area. This may be another important source of iron ore which had been denied to Gondor.
2. Some alloys have other properties, such as corrosion resistance or high-temperature strength, and therefore sacrifice raw strength, but I will not go into these here.
3. This new knowledge has led to an explosion in the quality and strength of steels in the last fifty years, and led to a whole new range of alloy steels. Instead of empirical methods handed down from blacksmith to blacksmith for generations, scientists today are able to decide almost ahead of time upon the desired properties and to produce a corresponding steel. The same is true of aluminum and titanium alloys.
4. While the *Gazetteer* is not exactly a primary source, I find myself in agreement with its views on this matter, and will therefore use it as a basis for elaboration.
5. These include the common "noble" metals, gold, silver and copper, which may all be beaten into bowls or cups or jewelry, but are too soft for weapons.
6. The layers of iron would leave a sinuous pattern along the blade, adding to its mystique.
7. Mithril, if available, would be smeltable and could be used for decorative purposes as a noble metal, but the more complex alloys would be unknown.
8. A cross between a noble metal and a hightech low-density metal, mithril is something of a conundrum.
9. I don't believe Sauron could make these alloys, unless he wheedled the knowledge out of Celebrimbor. In earlier times, the Feanorean school would have known the secrets, but would they tell anyone? The makers of the Nauglimir had a supply, but they may only have known how to utilize its nobler properties for decoration.
10. Gondor still has the knowledge, but I suspect that they would have it stored away in a dusty library. The skill and the metal to make Frodo's coat would have been long gone when he wore it. This highest level of metallurgy is unlikely to be found in use at the end of the Third Age, except perhaps in the Lonely Mountain or Lórien. More and more of the knowledge would be being lost as the Elves went across the sea and Dwarves slowly died off without a means of teaching their secrets to apprentices.

More on Population: A Response to Jason Beresford

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The response by Jason Beresford to my article on the population of Gondor and Arnor (OH *3: 4—7) was interesting and thought provoking. It gave me a reason to explain to myself the basis of my analysis in a way I hadn 't done before. Let me point out that anything that is said on this subject by myself, Jason Beresford, or anyone else is ultimately a matter of personal judgment. There are no right or wrong.*

Methodology

The statistics on which my (or any one else's) analysis is based are very hazy to say the least. There are simply no hard facts about population development in Europe or any other part of the world before the 18th century—there are only guesses and estimations based upon the probable trends of population development and upon information from smaller areas.

Tax returns are of good help here, since there are records which have survived from as early as the 9th century. In this context, the Doomsday Book of the Norman conquest is invaluable. Such tax return records are problematic, however, because they are based on households, hearths, or similar collectivities, rather than on individuals.'

This raises the question of the relative size of a normal household. A household of five would result in a population estimate 25% greater than a household of four. And what happens if there are six persons per household instead of four? The only conclusion is that all numbers are very uncertain.

Furthermore, in order to be representative, the average reached must be based on a large selection. To apply an average number to a small area may seem scientific, but it contradicts statistical principles and certainly gives a false security, since it necessarily results in the appearance of very accurate numbers.[2]

The small size of the areas Jason Beresford has chosen forces him to round his figures off to the nearest thousand (as modern population statistics usually do); by contrast, I had rounded off to the nearest hundred thousand. In his analysis of Arnor, seven out of the fifteen areas Jason has chosen measure 5,000 square kilometers or less (smaller than the state of Delaware), whereas the actual average area in Arnor is about 9,300 square kilometers (or smaller than Connecticut). I'm sorry to say, but the thousand square kilometers of the Lower Annabrith river valley (not much more than an ordinary county) looks slightly ridiculous to me. To extrapolate the population of a small area from an assumed population average is as much of a guess as assigning a number at random, but since it gives the (baseless) impression of scientific research, it is far more misleading.

There are roughly four levels of population density in Europe during the late 13th century. The highest level is present in Italy and the low countries (Belgium and the Netherlands) with an average population density of 40 inhabitants per square kilometer. The next highest is representative of Germany, France and England, with some 25 inhabitants per square kilometer. They are followed by Poland, the Balkans, Asia Minor and the outer areas of the British Isles with a density of about 10 inhabitants per square kilometer. Finally, we have Scandinavia and the European parts of the former Soviet Union with about 2 persons per square kilometer.[3]

If we look at Europe during the Roman period (say, about 200 AD), the most populous areas are Italy and Greece with more than 20 inhabitants per square kilometer. Most Roman provinces (including the African and Asian ones, as well as non-Roman Germany) had a population density of between 10 and 20. It was only on the British Isles, in Scandinavia, and in Eastern Europe that the population density would have been lower than 10 persons per square kilometer. The conclusion would be that in areas within an organized state where subsistence is based on agriculture, the average population density seldom falls below 10. It is only in tribal societies (as the opposite of organized states) and/or nomadic or semi-nomadic societies that we have numbers much lower than 10 inhabitants per square kilometer.[4]

Anfalas

As explained above, it is fair to assume that 10 inhabitants per square kilometer could be used for less developed areas within an organized state, especially if we are talking about peak numbers. Looking at Gondor, I could have used the "Roman" range of 10-20 or the "Medieval" range of 10-40. Since I found the Roman range too narrow and the Medieval range too wide, I made a compromise and set the most developed area (the Anduin valley) at 30, the intermediate (the peninsula of Belfalas) at 20, and the less developed areas at 10.[5]

The less developed areas within the organized state of Gondor are Lamedon and Anfalas in the west, the coastland of Harondor in the south, and the habitable area of Calenardhon in the north. Enedwaith is very much a tribal area where royal control or influence is nominal. Accordingly, Enedwaith would have a lower population density than those mentioned above. The interior of Harondor is probably half-desert or at least arid with a small, mostly nomadic population (thus much lower than an agrarian society). Anfalas and Lamedon are very similar in degree of development, society and density of population, and I can find no logical grounds in Tolkien's writings for there to be any major difference between them.[6]

Arnor

My position regarding Arnor differs from Jason's for very much the same reasons as with Anfalas. His analysis results in a density of less than 5 for the entirety Arnor at the beginning of the Third Age, when the realm ought to have been at its peak (c. 450,000 square kilometers). However, I can't see why the realm at that time should have a population density which is less than half the average for the less developed areas in Europe under normal circumstances. I won't quarrel with Jason's assumption that most people in Eriador live in the river valleys or around Lake Evendim, because I argue exactly this point in my previous article (OH 3:6); but I do not consider it a valid assumption that the population of Elendil's realm should be on a par with the average density for unorganized tribal societies.

In some ways, even a density of 10 is too low for Arnor at its zenith. I myself had initially considered a higher value, but found that either the population at its nadir (c. TA 2000) would be too great, or its drop from zenith to nadir would unrealistically steep. A point to remember is that all figures for population density represent averages (i.e., 10 persons are not living on each and every square kilometer.).

As I suggest in my article, most of Arnor's population is concentrated in the west. Rhudaur is the wildest area with the smallest population among the three successor states.

Developments from the split of 861 to the destruction of 1975 must have reinforced this imbalance, as well as the continuing presence of Trolls and Orcs in the Misty Mountains after the fall of Angmar.

Frodo and his friends traveled first through a large woodland area until they reached Bree, and then they moved through the wildest and least inhabited region of Eriador. We would not be allowing the author of The Red Book of Westmarch much poetic license for neglecting to mention such unimportant settlements as this region might have contained. That Tolkien doesn't say much about Arnor is no proof that Eriador was depopulated most of the time.[7]

Umbar

After having analyzed Jason Beresford's figures, I don't think there is that much of a difference between us.[8] Due to the uncertainty in all these numbers, we must allow for a margin of error of at least +/- 10-15% (i.e., 500,000-700,000). I would perhaps distribute the figures slightly differently, with less population on the southern side and more on the peninsula.

More significant differences exist between us with respect to the population outside the neighborhood of Umbar. I estimated a population of 100,000 for the area between Rath Annûn and the River Harnen in the north, and the Annabrith, Gondcithel and Cuiviërant valleys in the south. Jason Beresford sets the population of the southern part alone at 130,000 people, which I find to large. In my opinion, he largely overrates both Dûsalan with its surrounding territory and the Annabrith valley.[9]

Excursus: The Demographic Use of the Term "Dúnadan"

The word "Dúnadan" may alternately refer to two different groups of people. First, it may have a racial sense denoting those of true Númenórean extraction (the descendants of Elros' followers). Second, it may designate those who participate in Dúnadan culture without necessarily possessing the genetic characteristics of the Three Houses of the Edain.[10]

As regards the realms-in-exile, all or most of their inhabitants would fall within the second group if assimilated into Dúnadan culture; by contrast, the Dúnedain in the racial sense would constitute a very small minority. Elendil and his sons arrived in Middle-earth with nine ships following the Akllabêth. Even assuming that these were quite large ships, this group couldn't have amounted to more than 5,000-6,000. If the total population of Gondor amounts to around 9,000,000 people (OH 3: 5), then the racial Dunedain would make up only about .05% of the total population (i.e., about one for every two thousand).

Even if we add to this number the Númenóreans living in Pelargir and other colonies along the coasts, we are still talking about no more than 100,000-200,000 people, or 1-2% of the total population—certainly a minority;[11] Just because the (racial) Dúnedain were few in Arnor doesn't mean that the entire population was small. If that had been the case, the population in Gondor must also have been quite minuscule throughout its entire history.

Endnotes

1. Taxes assessed upon individuals are a rather modern invention.
2. "The larger the base used, the better the average" is a basic rule within the statistical science.
3. This last must be taken with some caution, as nearly two thirds of Sweden are mountainous or otherwise uninhabitable (given the agricultural techniques of the Middle Ages). Disregarding these marginal areas, the population density rises to about 6—8 persons per square kilometer.
4. And the number of 10 isn't much—we are talking about one to two households per square kilometer. A village of 500 persons would be the only habitation in a 15 square mile radius.
5. Remember that we are always talking about the population of Gondor at its largest.
6. My reason for separating them was purely practical, since this made it easier to measure them on the map.
7. When looking at his writings, it is clear that Tolkien was more interested in Gondor than in Arnor—just look at how deeply he goes into the history of Gondor in "Appendix A," when compared with his rather sketchy description of Arnor.
8. Jason Beresford places the population of the coasts of Nen Umbar (as far south as the Annabrith) together with the peninsula at 570,000 inhabitants, while my own estimate comes to 600,000 persons (a difference of 30,000 or about 5%).
9. By the way, if Dûsalan isn't a part of the territory of Umbar (as I was going to suggest in the forthcoming *Kin-strife* module), the most logical alternative would be for it to be a dependent city-state in the same way as most smaller ports in the Adriatic were controlled by Venice during the Middle Ages.
10. As I understand it, only Elros and his descendants enjoyed the extra longevity of several hundred years.
11. A useful analogy might be the number of Englishmen in the British colonies of the 19th century or the number of Frenchmen in the French colonies of the same period.

CALL FOR REVIEWS!!!

We would like to have our readers submit reviews of the *2nd edition MEKP* rules, as well as for the *Amor* realm module (which should be out well before our next issue). Also, it would be good if someone could write up a review of *Morgoth's Ring,* the latest installment in the "History of Middle-earth" series, oecause it contains materials (particularly from Part V "Myths Transformed") which will have significant implications for how we understand Tolkien's world in a gaming context. So start writing!

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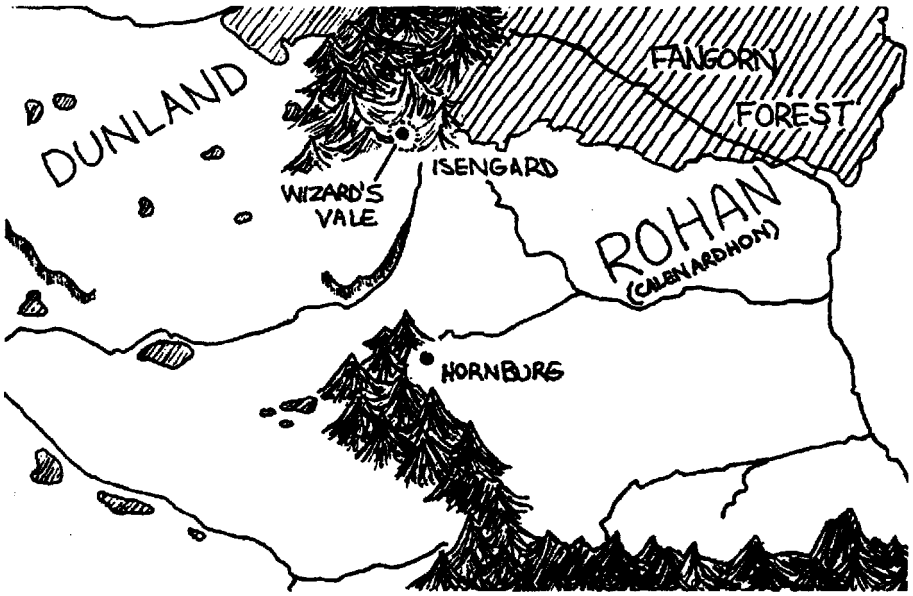
Enemies to Protect Us

Tom Schneider 455 Brahms Way #212 Sunnyvale, CA 94087 USA

This adventure is set in Dunland during the War of the Ring, just days before the Wizard Saruman visits open war against the Men of Rohan. The scenario is written from the perspective of player-characters who would be willing to spy on behalf of Rohan and whose presence in Dunlending territory would not arouse undue suspicion. The ultimate goal of the characters will be to warn Théodred of an alliance between lsengard and a powerful coalition of Dunlendish clans soon to be unleashed against the Westfold. If they succeed, Théodred will be able to order the Western Muster in time; if they fail, things may not go so well for Rohan at the Fords of lsen.

[Note: This adventure is based primarily upon Tolkicn's works and the author's imagination, but certain aspects—the names of the Dunlendish clans, the figure of Maben and the Temple of Justice—have been borrowed from the ICE module Dunland and the Southern Misty Mountains. *These elements have been adapted to fit the* 3019 *setting of the present adventure.]*

The Plot



Rohan and Dunland

A long-standing enmity has existed between the Rohirrim and the folk they call the Dunlendings. When the Eorlingas took possession of the green fields of Calenardhon in the year 2510, they did not occupy a wholly empty land. Over the five preceding centuries of the Watchful Peace, Daen-folk from the Enedwaith and Western Gondor freely trafficked through the Gap of Calenardhon and intermarried with the people of that land. As the Men of Gondor waned and the world around them grew unfriendly, the rich grasslands of Calenardhon increasingly became a tempting prize for the clans of Dunfearan and their herds.

These easterly migrations were halted by the arrival of the Eorlingas, who claimed all the land between the River Isen and the Emyn Muil as their own. Over the next hundred years, the new lords of Riddermark contested the land with their adversaries. King Brego succeeded in driving all Dunlendish folk westward across the Isen, and Aldor his son even embarked on raids and reprisals against their homeland in Enedwaith, sealing a centuries-long hatred. In time, this hatred bore fruit.

Maben and the Temple of Justice

In his unending efforts to destroy his chief foes—the Dúnedain— the Dark Lord Sauron has always found ready helpers among Lesser Men who have suffered wrong at the hands of Gondor or its allies. The Men of Dunland have often listened gladly to his counsels, and have in the past fallen prey to his influence. In the days of the kings, a Sauronic cult had arisen which sought to inflame the Daen of Enedwaith to revolt against the power of Gondor. This cult was led by a Daen named Maben (secretly a servant of the Dark Lord), and was centered around a stronghold known as the Temple of Justice.

The Temple and its cult had long been abandoned and forgotten when the Rohirrim took possession of Calenardhon some five hundred years ago. But in 2951, Sauron declared himself openly in Mordor and strove to renew his influence over former allies and servants. Whispered rumors spread through Dunland among the clans that Maben their liberator had returned from the dead to lead them once more against their enemies.

This man who claimed to be Maben was in truth a newly recruited minion of the Dark Lord, whom Sauron had instructed to resurrect the Temple of Justice. When the original cult was forced underground by the power of Gondor, its surviving servants sought refuge in the caves of the southern Misty Mountains. There they brought all of the spells and artifacts of cult, and continued to practice its rites for a time until they eventually died out and were forgotten. When the Dark Lord commanded the new Maben to revive the Temple, he sent him first to this refuge, known among the clans as "the Highway Caves."

From the secrecy of these caves, Maben sowed discontent among the Dunlendings. He succeeded in polarizing the clans into two camps: the Daen Iontis and the Daen Coentis. The former were led by Daonghlas of Clan Arailt and openly supported war against Rohan. The latter were led by Clan Feargan; and though they too hated the Men of Riddermark, they remembered the evil of the ancient Temple of Justice and refused to be counted among its allies. In time, Maben's power and support among the Daen Iontis was great enough for him to rebuild the Temple.

The Temple of Justice was refounded with the aid of sorcerous power. Its foundation was bound to an alter in a ceremonial chamber beneath the Temple, which Maben consecrated with the aid of the Dagger of lam Irrath. This artifact was used in the founding of the original Temple and had been preserved by its survivors in the Highway Caves.

Out of his guilt in assisting the foundation of the original Temple of Justice, the wizard responsible for the creation of this dagger made a twin. This second artifact, called the Dagger of Ian Imran, had the power of reversing the consecration of the alter and so undoing the foundations of the Temple (This was, in fact, how the original Temple had been ruined.). After completing the ceremony of founding the new Temple, Maben had both daggers hidden in the Highway Caves for safe keeping, so that they could never again be used to thwart the Dark Lord's plans.

Isengard and Saruman

In order to achieve his master's plans against Gondor's allies in Rohan, Maben must come to terms with his treacherous neighbor in Isengard. The Wizard Saruman took up residence in the tower of Orthanc in 2759 at the behest of the Steward of Gondor. With his coming, Rohan would no longer have cause to fear incursions from the folk of Dunland. But the white wizard proved faithless to Gondor, declaring himself Lord of Isengard in 2953.

At the Dark Lord's bidding, Maben has approached Saruman with an offer of friendship and assistance from the Daen Iontis in the anticipated war against Rohan. Maben rightly believes that association with the wizard of Isengard will cement for him the allegiance of many of the clans. A ceremonial gathering at the newly-founded Temple of Justice is being planned, at which Saruman has agreed to be present to speak on Maben's behalf before the Iontis. In return, Maben has made use of the Highway Caves (which connect the territory of Clan Arailt to the Vale of Isengard) to send men and material support to his ally. Were it known to the Daen Coentis clans that this

as yet secret alliance entailed friendship with Orcs and other sworn foes of the Daen-folk, Maben might have a clan war on his hands.

Théodred and the Westfold

Saruman was quick to support the enemies of Rohan (including the Dunlendings), whom he allowed to encroach on the borders of Riddermark to its weakening. This has been generally known to the Men of Westfold, and Théodred, marshal of Helm's Deep and son to the king, has taken appropriate measures to hold the Fords of Isen against this renewed threat But since 3014 (five years ago), his father King Théoden has fallen ill, and his policies toward Isengard and the Westfold are more and more being influenced and contrived by Théoden's deceitful counsellor Gríma Wormtongue, who does everything in his power to aid his true master in the overthrow of the Mark.

It is now February of 3019, and young Théodred is becoming increasingly concerned about this situation. Four months ago, Black Riders thundered across the Fords of Isen, bound for Isengard. Close on their heels rode the Wizard Gandalf astride Shadowfax. Since the strange events of those days, Théodred's scouts have marked a sudden increase of activity in and around Isengard, and there are rumors that the Dunlendings purpose to join the white wizard in a great attack upon Westfold.

Théodred greatly desires to discover the truth or falsity of these rumors, so that he may prepare for the defense accordingly. But the young marshal fears to wait upon his father's consent for his actions, because of Wormtongue's guile. Therefore, Théodred has resolved to send a group of spies across the Isen to scout out affairs in Dunland and to frustrate, if may be, any designs the Dunlendings may harbor with Saruman.

The Course of Events

The player-characters are gathered before Théodred at Helm's Deep on February I st, 3019. Saruman plans to launch his first assault on the Fords of Isen on February 25th, and will speak for Maben at the Temple of Justice on February 12th. This gives Théodred's spies less than two weeks to uncover the link between Isengard and the Iontis clans, and less than another two weeks to make it back safely to Westfold to warn Théodred before Saruman begins his attack.

The Overturned Wagon

Some twenty leagues along the old road that runs northwest through Dunland from the Fords of Isen, the characters will encounter an overturned wagon. Four draft horses graze alongside the road and three Dunlending men appear to be attempting to turn the wagon off its side. The wagon's cargo of melons lies strewn about on the ground.

The owner of the wagon is a Ruadh clansman named Aaron MacAyr, who was travelling with his brother near to the territory of Clan Arailt to trade his melons with other Coentis clans. He was ambushed by two Arailt clansmen and his brother was slain (The body is hidden under a tarp behind the overturned wagon.).

The Arailt men ordered Aaron to drive them south along the road towards some unspecified destination, but Aaron heard his captors whispering to each other about the Highway Caves in the mountains nearby. While Aaron's eyes were on the road, one of the Arailt men hollowed out one of his melons and hid within it the message they were bearing from Maben.

My Most Esteemed Colleague,

I send you this unexpected missive to express my deep gratitudes for your gift arrived in most exceedingly fine condition and was entirely well met.

I a afraid I must now move on to more pressing matters. The excavation of the old temple must commence sooner than anticipated, but this should lead to a ceremony sooner than before anticipated. I will keep this brief, for I know that you also are quite busy preparing. I will say in parting that together we shall prevail.

Sincerely
Maben

Figure 1 – The Letter

If the characters decide to search through the scattered melons, a SEARCH roll combined with an IDEA roll will reveal the hidden parchment (written in Westron, as Dunlendish is not a written language). *See Figure 1 to left.* Aaron will make no indication of his current plight to the characters, unless he believes that they are friendly and could overpower his captors. The Arailt men will try to play off the situation as what it appears to be: an accident. They will continue this story until there seems to be no hope of proving it as true to the characters, in which case they will attempt to persuade them to help them get on their way. They will fight only as a last resort, especially if they are outnumbered. If the characters free Aaron of his captors, he will tell them the story of his abduction and offer them the hospitality of his home village of Dochnan, which is located near the western edge of the Caerdh Wood. If the characters do not appear to be spies for Rohan, their newfound friend may also (if asked) reveal to them something of the current situation in Dunland—the return of the Temple of Justice and the growing dissension between the Iontis and Coentis clans. Aaron knows nothing of Maben's relationship to Saruman, but he has heard of the Highway Caves and their general location within Arailt territory (though he is unaware of the tunnel that leads from them to the Wizard's Vale).

The Village of Dochnan

At The Glade and Spear inn at Dochnan, the characters can acquire free room and board thanks to their friend Aaron MacAyr. They will also learn of a Dunlending named Edwin Stewart, who may be able to help them with information and possibly accompany them to the Temple of Justice. Edwin is a mighty warrior and the local hero of Dochnan, who is violently opposed to Maben and the Iontis. He knows about the date and time of the ceremonial gathering on February 12th, but does not know that Saruman will be there. He also knows of the legends concerning the Daggers of Iam Irrath and

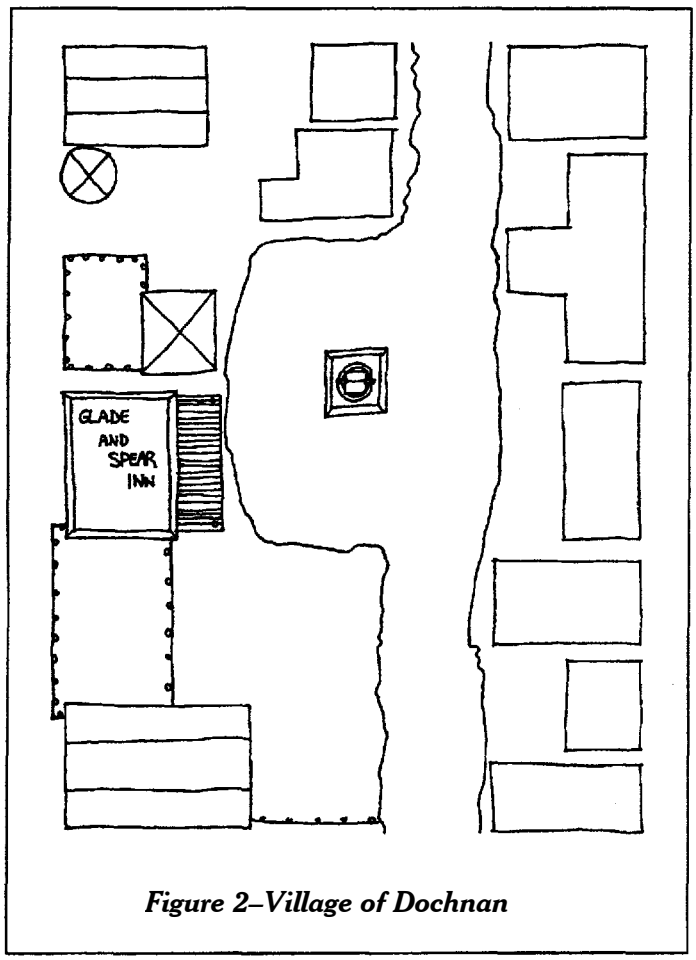


Figure 2–Village of Dochnan

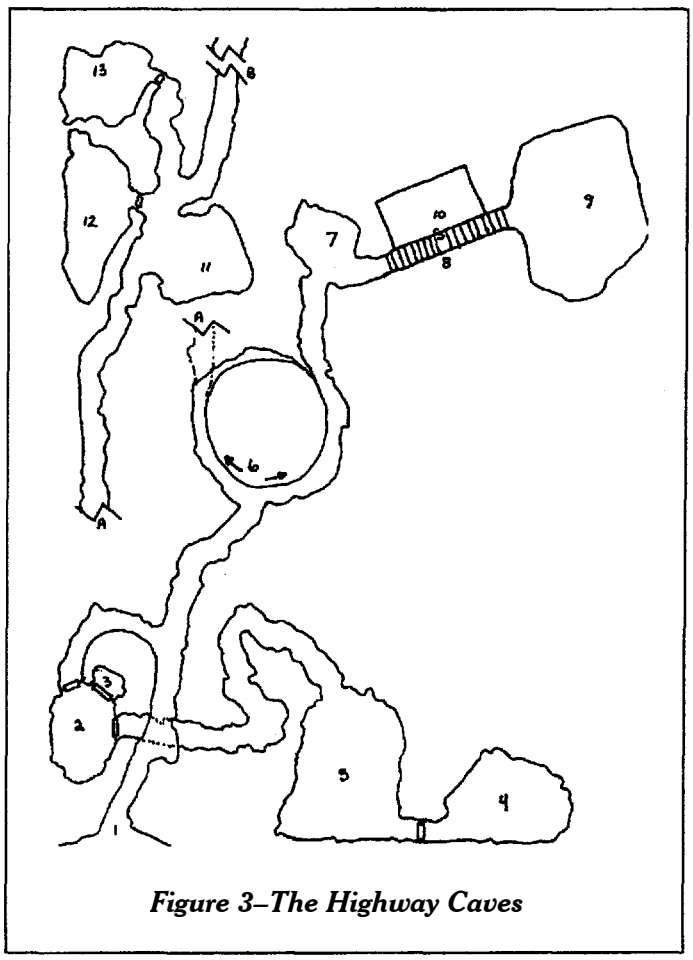


Figure 3–The Highway Caves

Ian Imran and of their use, but does not know their current whereabouts. Edwin wears the traditional kilt of red and black tartan of Clan Ruadh.

If any of the characters have lost their mounts by this time, they may acquire new mounts free of charge as long as they promise to return them in equivalent condition. If there is a need to bring new player-characters into the game at this point, these may be drawn from among Edwin's friends or the village militia. The men of Dochnan will be equipped either with targets and broadswords or claymores, and wear ring mail suits with plate helms.

The Highway Caves

The cave entrance is in the eastern portion of Arailt territory. The borders of Clan Arailt are patrolled regularly about every two hours by a group of ten trained warriors led by a sergeant, who will thoroughly investigate anything out of the ordinary. The Cave entrance is partially concealed and has no appointed guard. Characters who follow the passageway east will eventually end up in the Wizard's Vale. The distance between the "A" connection points is approximately three-fourths of a mile. The distance between the "B" two connection points is approximately seven and one-quarter miles.

1. **THE CAVE ENTRANCE.**

2. **GUARD POST.** The guard post is constantly manned by at least two Arailt warriors at all times. As with all Dunnish clans men, the Arailt wear a traditional kilt and sporran. The tartan of the kilt is a mixture of evergreen and dark blue plaid.

3. **STORAGE CLOSET.** Inside this closet is stored various equipment and some supplies, among which are two lanterns, ten flasks of oil, two hundred feet of rope, a dozen torches, and flint and steel.

4. **SERGEANT'S QUARTERS.** This room is considerably better furnished than the rest of the rooms inhabited by the Arailt. Its center is adorned by a massive mahogany desk with an accompanying oversized chair. Bookshelves line the rear of the room, and a small bed lies in one corner. This room will always contain the sergeant currently commanding the garrison stationed here. The sergeant will immediately investigate any kind of noise emanating from the barracks (# 5). Sergeants are distinguished from the rest of the warriors by the feather that they wear straight up on the side of their tams.

5. **BARRACKS.** The barracks contain between two and six resting Arailt warriors at any given time. There are bunks for approximately thirty men, and a cooking area of to one side. These troops will be cautious, but not quick to attack unexpected visitors.

6. **THE SPIRAL.** A pathway has been carved into this cavern to spiral both up and down, thus providing a means to reach both the upper and lower caves.

7. **OLD TEMPLE GUARD POST.** Two temple guards are stationed here. The temple guards wear white robes with gold trim. The polearms they carry are similar to military forks but the outer edges have been sharpened into blades.

8. **SYMMETRICAL STAIRWAY.** These stairs are mirror images of each other, and completely out of place in the rough hewn caverns. The stonework that went into the construction of the stairs was obviously the accomplishment of a great mason. They have been polished to give almost a shine. A secret door way activated by the lever mechanism in the old temple (# 9) opens out here.

9. **THE OLD TEMPLE.** This is the remains of the old Temple of Justice. It is lavishly decorated with tapestries and statuary, and two temple guards stand at each side of the entrance. A massive stone table with strange runes engraved upon it stands centered in front of the rear wall. Upon the table are the daggers of lam Irrath and Ian Imran. Hidden within some of the carvings in a back leg is the lever to open a secret door.

   The Temple of Justice priests wear white robes with blue trim. They have been taught a wide range of spells and knowledge of magical lore. Priests are brought up from the ranks of the temple guard and therefore make formidable melee opponents as well. The priests are fanatical to the end for the Temple of Justice. Should the characters stumble upon the temple during a ceremony, the priest and guards will feign gestures of welcome to the intruders in an attempt to put them off their guard before attacking them.

10. **SECRET CHAMBER.** This chamber is the office and sleep ing quarters of the priest. Along the wall nearest the temple is a wardrobe containing ceremonial robes and a weapons rack holding four derfel polearms. On the opposite wall is an oak desk and a bed. On the desk is an unfinished letter, *See figure 4 below.*

11. **GUARD ALCOVE.** Two Orc guards maintain security for this encampment. They will ask (in Dunlendish) for the pass word. If the password "waterfall" is not given immediately, they will assume defensive potions and attempt to alert the camp.

12. **BARRACKS.** Four to six Orc warriors will be at rest in this room. Should the alarm sound or anyone other than another Orc enter the barracks, they will retrieve their weapons and move to attack without putting on armor. Orc warriors wear a mixture of armor pieces that have been scavenged here and there. These Orcs are willing to die to protect the tunnels.

13. **ORC CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS.** This room has been converted to house the Orc captain Grensch and his mate. Both will be present unless Grensch is called away by an alarm. The female will not attack unless threatened. Grensch has been charged with the defense of the tunnel passageway that connects Dunland to the Wizard's Vale. He receives his orders directly from Saruman the White. These details cannot even be tortured out of him. He will not retreat.

Grensch,

I am writing to let you know that we will be sending a gift to your master. In the hope that you will not waste time molesting my minions, I am sending you the new password. Change it from "waterfall" to "stairway".

Sincer

Figure 4—Unfinished Letter

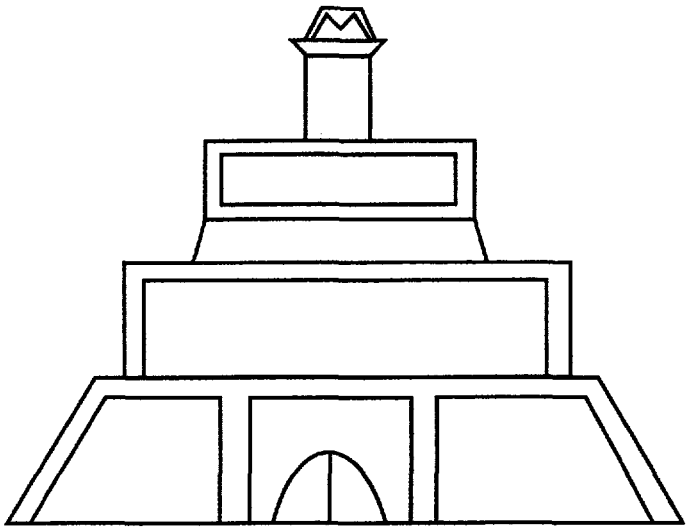


Figure 5—The Temple of Justice

The Temple of Justice

The Temple lies roughly twenty leagues northeast of the village. The above ground structure of the Temple has four levels, each with walkways exposed to the outside. During the gathering of the Iontis clans, the first two levels will be guarded by forty men each (ten to a side). The third level will have twenty guards (five to a side) and the fourth will have a priest and ten more guards. If characters had the foresight to keep some of the robes and derfels from the Highway Caves, they might be able to enter the Temple.

The Temple Interior

A. MAIN TEMPLE CHAMBER. This is the main room for holding public ceremonies and temple functions. The room is flanked on both sides by eight large pillars made of black marble. At its far end is a raised dais with a throne and podium, also of black marble.

B. GUARD POST. Two temple guards will always be standing guard at these locations.

C. PRIESTS'QUARTERS. These fairly normal living quarters for the priests of the temple.

D. BARRACKS. This living area is designed to accommodate as many as a hundred temple guards.

E. BRASS BOUND DOORS. These lead to the private ceremony chambers.

The Ceremonial Chambers

A. BRASS BOUND DOORS. These massive doors lead to the Temple interior.

B. CEREMONIAL GLADE. This underground chamber is actually an amazingly lush glade that has been turned into a huge ceremonial chamber. In the center of the glade is a dais upon which lies a huge violet marble table encrusted with strange engravings and runes which glow faintly blue. At the first sign of any intrusion or conflict, Saruman will depart the Temple of Justice by way of a teleportation spell. There should be no way for any character to engage him in combat.

C. SILVER DOORS. Two temple guards stand watch here. None save Maben may pass them freely.

D. FOYER. (Same as C above).

E. TREASURY. This holds the main treasure hoard of the temple, consisting of: 1) 1,200 coins of gold, 2) 3,244 coins of silver, 3) 128 coins of mithril, 4) 200 bars of gold, 5) 975 bars of silver, 6) 2 bars of mithril, 7) 23,543 silvers worth of gems, jewels, and other items of worth.

Figure 6–The Temple Interior

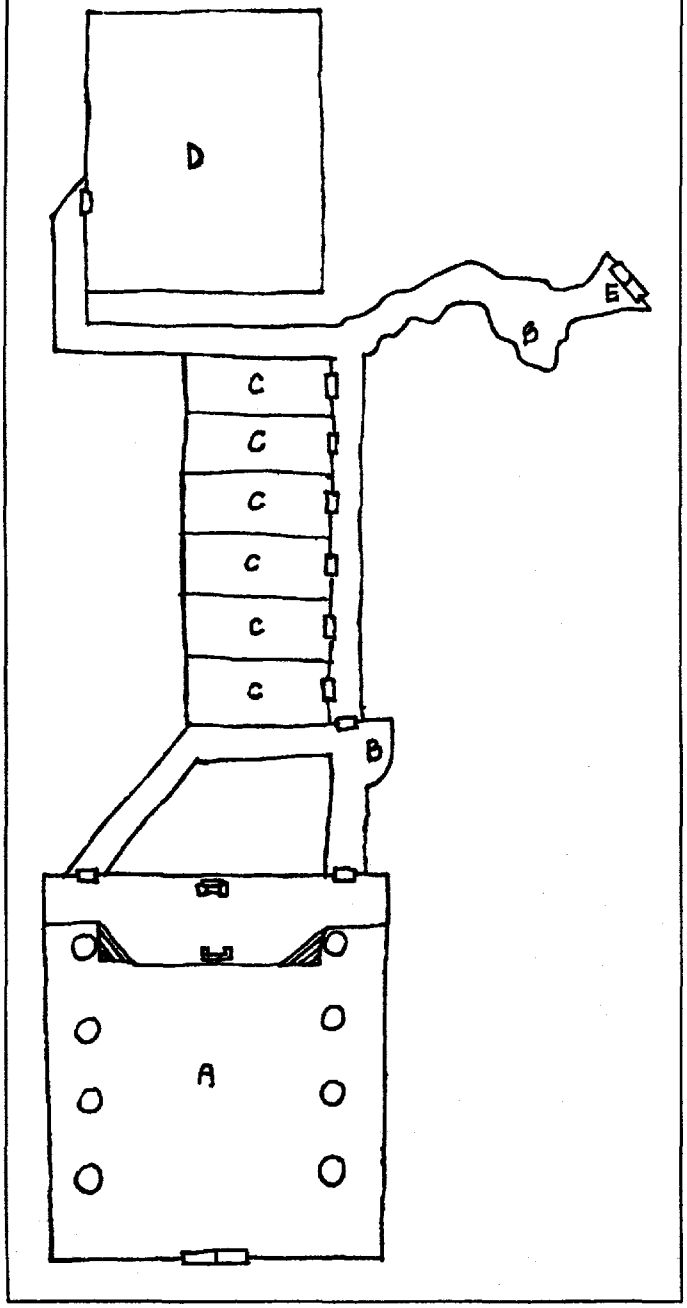
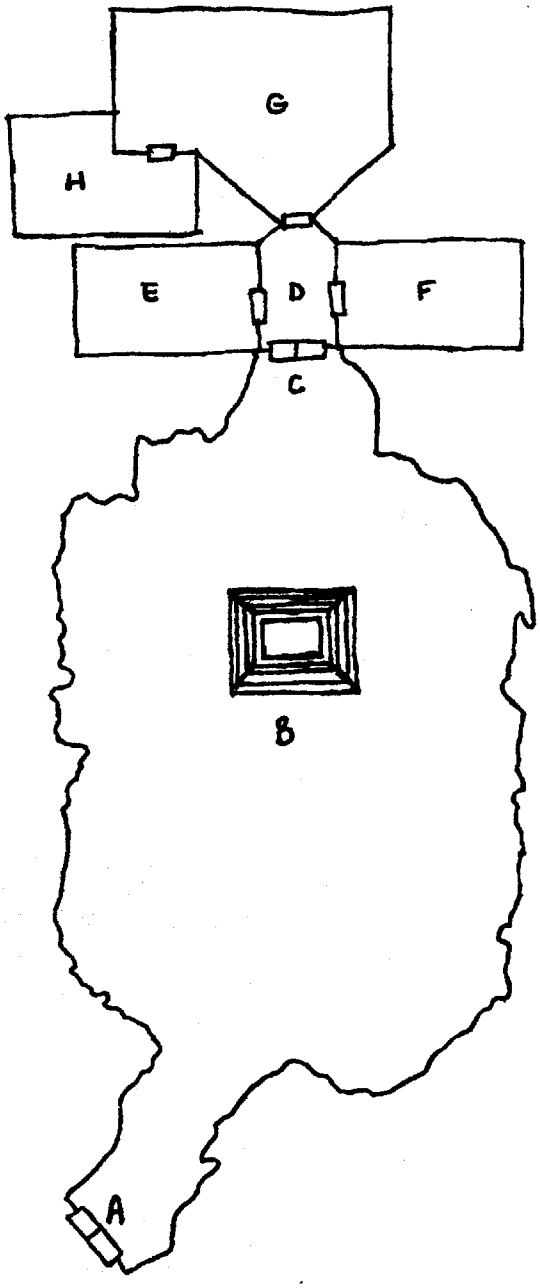


Figure 7–The Ceremonial Chambers



F. ARMORY. This is the main weapon and armor storage area for the temple. It contains: 1) 200 suits of full chainmail armor, 2) 200 Derfels, 3) 30 Scimitars, 4) 100 Daggers, 5) 20 enchanted priest's robes.

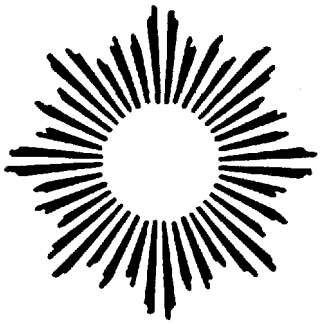
G. MABEN'S BEDCHAMBER. It is within this lavishly decorated room that Maben resides. Maben wears an enchanted robe made of woven silver and trimmed in violet. Maben is not foolish enough to fight to the death, instead he will escape using a special talisman located in his study (H). If he must use this means of escape, he must abandon all that he is wearing save his loincloth.

H. MABEN'S SORCERY CHAMBER. Here the high priest practices his dark arts.

Destroying the Temple Altar

If the characters have possession of the Daggers of Iam Irrath and Ian Imran, they may attempt to use them to undo the sorcery that binds the foundation of Maben's temple. If the blade of Ian Imran is used to scratch a line through the center of a dark altar, a glowing sword will float in the air above the altar and slice along the scratched line, cleanly cutting it in two. This will destroy the aura of the altar as well as the structure bound up with it. Edwin Stewart may know of this procedure, or perhaps the characters may force the information out of the priest from the Highway Caves.

If they succeed in rendering the Temple inoperative, the characters may accompany Edwin Stewart in an effort to persuade the Daen Coentis clans to desist from joining the forces of Isengard against Rohan. This will no doubt be a difficult task, given the relations between Dunland and Rohan. Arguments should rest on the fact that the Daen Iontis are planning this attack for reasons that have nothing to do with Dunland's quarrel with the Rohirrim. Characters might also emphasize the Temple's affiliation with Orcs and friends of Orcs.



NPC Profiles (RQ3 stats)

ARAILT WARRIOR

STR: 14 CON: 15 SIZ: 16 INT: 10
POW: 12 DEX: 16 APP: 11
DEX SRM: 2 + SIZE SRM: 1 = MELEE SRM: 3
Magic Points: 1 Fatigue Points: 29

WEAPON	SR	A%	P%	DAMAGE
Broadsword	5	39	27	1D8+1 (+1D4)
Target Shield	6	19	42	1D6+1 (+1D4)
Claymore (2H)	4	44	38	2D8 (+1D4)

*Only one warrior out of five carries a Claymore greatsword.

SKILLS: Dodge: 37, Scan: 45, Search: 39

HIT POINTS:	16	ARMOR
R Leg:	6	(no armor)
L Leg:	6	(no armor)
Abdomen:	6	(6 points: Ring mail hauberk and hard leather sporran)
Chest:	8	(5 points: Ring mail hauberk)
R Arm:	5	(5 points: Ring mail hauberk sleeves)
L Arm:	5	(5 points: Ring mail hauberk sleeves)
Head:	6	(8 points: Open-faced plate helm)

ARAILT SERGEANT

STR: 17 CON: 15 SIZ: 16 INT: 12
POW: 15 DEX: 16 APP: 12
DEX SRM: 2 + SIZE SRM: 1 = MELEE SRM: 3
Magic Points: 15 Fatigue Points: 32

WEAPON	SR	A%	P%	DAMAGE
Broadsword	5	49	37	1D8+1 (+1D6)
Target Shield	6	29	52	1D6+1 (+1D6)
Claymore (2H)	4	54	48	2D8 (+1D6)

*Only one in every ten sergeants carries a Claymore.

SKILLS: Dodge: 47, Scan: 55, Search: 49

HIT POINTS:	16	ARMOR
R Leg:	6	(no armor)
L Leg:	6	(no armor)
Abdomen:	6	(6 points: Ring mail hauberk and hard leather sporran)
Chest:	8	(5 points: Ring mail hauberk)
R Arm:	5	(5 points: Ring mail hauberk sleeves)
L Arm:	5	(5 points: Ring mail hauberk sleeves)
Head:	6	(8 points: Open-faced plate helm)

TEMPLE GUARD

STR: 14 CON: 15 SIZ: 16 INT: 10
POW: 16 DEX: 16 APP: 14
DEX SRM: 2 + SIZE SRM: 1 = MELEE SRM: 3
Magic Points: 16 Fatigue Points: 29

WEAPON	SR	A%	P%	DAMAGE
Derfel	4	43	47	2D6+2 (+1D4)

*Only one in every ten sergeants carries a Claymore.

SKILLS: Dodge: 39, Scan: 43, Search: 36

HIT POINTS:	16	ARMOR
R Leg:	6	(7 points: Chain mail leggings)
L Leg:	6	(7 points: Chain mail leggings)
Abdomen:	6	(7 points: Chain mail hauberk)
Chest:	8	(7 points: Chain mail hauberk)
R Arm:	5	(7 points: Chain mail hauberk sleeves)
L Arm:	5	(7 points: Chain mail hauberk sleeves)
Head:	6	(5 points: Light chain mail coif)

TEMPLE PRIEST

STR: 15 CON: 17 SIZ: 14 INT: 16
POW: 16 DEX: 16 APP: 15
DEX SRM: 2 + SIZE SRM: 2 = MELEE SRM: 4
Magic Points: 16 Fatigue Points: 32

WEAPON	SR	A%	P%	DAMAGE
Derfel	5	69	67	2D6+1 (+1D4)
Scimitar	6	59	42	1D6+1 (+1D4)

*Although the priests possess skill in use of derfel, they now carry and use scimitars

SKILLS: Dodge: 67, Scan: 55, Search: 59

HIT POINTS:	16	ARMOR
R Leg:	6	(4 points: enchanted robes)
L Leg:	6	(4 points: enchanted robes)
Abdomen:	6	(4 points: enchanted robes)
Chest:	8	(4 points: enchanted robes)
R Arm:	5	(4 points: enchanted robes)
L Arm:	5	(4 points: enchanted robes)
Head:	6	(2 points: platinum circlet)

ORC WARRIOR

STR: 16 CON: 16 SIZ: 16 INT: 9
POW: 10 DEX: 12 APP: 6
DEX SRM: 3 + SIZE SRM: 2 = MELEE SRM: 4
Magic Points: 10 Fatigue Points: 32

WEAPON	SR	A%	P%	DAMAGE
Falchion	6	42	17	1D6+1 (+1D4)
Round Shield	7	24	40	1D6+1 (+1D4)

*Although the priests possess skill in use of derfel, they now carry and use scimitars

SKILLS: Dodge: 27, Scan: 35, Search: 39

HIT POINTS:	16	ARMOR
R Leg:	6	(4 points: Chaotic mixture of different armors)
L Leg:	6	(4 points: Chaotic mixture of different armors)
Abdomen:	6	(4 points: Chaotic mixture of different armors)
Chest:	8	(4 points: Chaotic mixture of different armors)
R Arm:	5	(4 points: Chaotic mixture of different armors)
L Arm:	5	(4 points: Chaotic mixture of different armors)
Head:	6	(8 points: open-faced plate helm)

GRENSCH (ORC CAPTAIN)

STR: 17 CON: 17 SIZ: 18 INT: 13
POW: 16 DEX: 16 APP: 10
DEX SRM: 2 + SIZE SRM: 2 = MELEE SRM: 3
Magic Points: 16 Fatigue Points: 34

WEAPON	SR	A%	P%	DAMAGE
Broadsword	5	45	35	1D8+1 (+1D6)
Round Shield	6	24	50	1D6+1 (+1D4)
Greataxe*	4	51	43	2D6+2 (+1D6)

*The Orc captain has a choice of either weapon during an engagement.

SKILLS: Dodge: 47, Scan: 55, Search: 49

HIT POINTS:	18	ARMOR
R Leg:	6	(7 points: Chain mail leggings)
L Leg:	6	(7 points: Chain mail leggings)
Abdomen:	6	(7 points: Chain mail hauberk)
Chest:	8	(7 points: Chain mail hauberk)
R Arm:	5	(7 points: Chain mail hauberk sleeves)
L Arm:	5	(7 points: Chain mail hauberk sleeves)
Head:	6	(8 points: open-faced plate helm)

MABEN (HIGH PRIEST)

STR: 12 CON: 18 SIZ: 12 INT: 19
POW: 20 DEX: 20 APP: 12
DEX SRM: 1 + SIZE SRM: 2 = MELEE SRM: 3
Magic Points: 20 Fatigue Points: 30

WEAPON	SR	A%	P%	DAMAGE
Derfel	4	43	47	2D6+2
Scimitar	5	55	52	1D6+2
Dagger*	6	92	95	1D4+4

*the dagger Maben wields is enchanted: +2 to damage and +30% to attack and parry.

SKILLS: Dodge: 59, Scan: 73, Search: 46

HIT POINTS:	15	ARMOR
R Leg:	5	(6 points: enchanted woven silver robes)
L Leg:	5	(6 points: enchanted woven silver robes)
Abdomen:	5	(6 points: enchanted woven silver robes)
Chest:	6	(6 points: enchanted woven silver robes)
R Arm:	3	(6 points: enchanted woven silver robes)
L Arm:	4	(6 points: enchanted woven silver robes)
Head:	5	(6 points: enchanted woven silver robe hood)

SARUMAN THE WHITE

STR: 12 CON: 18 SIZ: 12 INT: 24
POW: 28 DEX: 21 APP: 15
DEX SRM: 1 + SIZE SRM: 2 = MELEE SRM: 3
Magic Points: 28 Fatigue Points: 30

WEAPON	SR	A%	P%	DAMAGE
Staff	4	83	67	1D8+1
Dagger	6	92	95	1D4+2

SKILLS: Dodge: 53, Scan: 73, Search: 76

HIT POINTS:	15	ARMOR
R Leg:	5	(8 points: enchanted robes)
L Leg:	5	(8 points: enchanted robes)
Abdomen:	5	(8 points: enchanted robes)
Chest:	6	(8 points: enchanted robes)
R Arm:	3	(8 points: enchanted robes)
L Arm:	4	(8 points: enchanted robes)
Head:	5	(8 points: enchanted robes hood)

EDWIN STEWART

STR: 18 CON: 17 SIZ: 18 INT: 12
POW: 14 DEX: 17 APP: 15
DEX SRM: 2 + SIZE SRM: 1 = MELEE SRM: 3
Magic Points: 14 Fatigue Points: 35

WEAPON	SR	A%	P%	DAMAGE
Claymore (2H)	68	67	67	2D8 (+1D6)
Fist	6	77	74	1D3 (+1D6)
Dagger	6	56	55	1D4+2 (+1D6)

SKILLS: Dodge: 44, Scan: 63, Search: 56

HIT POINTS:	15	ARMOR
R Leg:	5	(5 points: Ring mail leggings)
L Leg:	5	(5 points: Ring mail leggings)
Abdomen:	5	(6 points: Ring mail hauberk and hard leather sporran)
Chest:	6	(5 points: Ring mail hauberk)
R Arm:	3	(5 points: Ring mail hauberk sleeves)
L Arm:	4	(5 points: Ring mail hauberk sleeves)
Head:	5	(8 points: Open-faced plate helm)